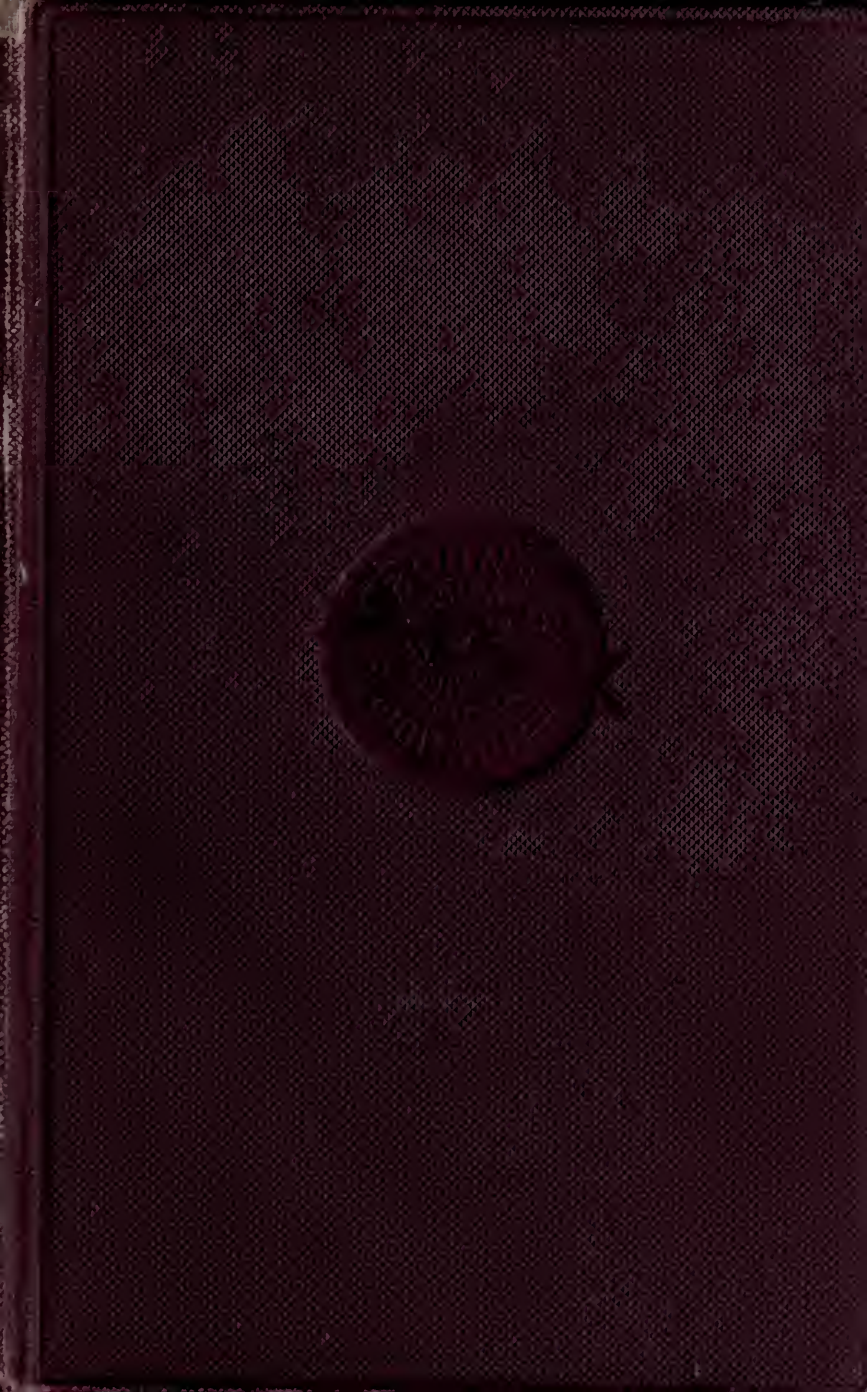

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HISTORY OF THE ARABS IN SPAIN

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HISTORY

OF THE

DOMINION OF THE ARABS IN SPAIN

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF

DR. J. A. CONDÉ

BY

MRS. JONATHAN FOSTER

IN THREE VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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PREFACE

OF THE SPANISH EDITORS.

When we undertook to supervise the "History of the Dominion of the Arabs in Spain," we were far from apprehending that the Second Volume, now about to be laid before the reader, would not make its appearance during the lifetime of its Author: yet so has it been determined in the decrees of an All-wise Providence. By his death the difficulties of our undertaking have been greatly increased; for although it is true that the work was completed, yet the last ameliorating touches had not been given to it by the hand of the Author. And who shall supply his place?—the place of Condé—profoundly imbued as he was with the most intimate and minute knowledge of his subject: who shall adequately perform the task which he has left unaccomplished? From his extensive and varied erudition, not only had we the right to expect the utmost exactitude, but even new lights thrown on every point not fully elucidated, as the pages went once more through his hands. But we are deprived of these advantages, and cannot but be conscious that the remaining volumes of our work must greatly suffer from that privation.

We have, nevertheless, done what in us lay to prevent the just expectations of the public from being disappointed;

and as regards the two last volumes in particular, have consulted the most respected authorities among Chronologists for the verification of such dates as have been left undetermined by our lamented author. We are, nevertheless, compelled to entreat the indulgence of the reader, who will, as we hope, be the more disposed to grant us so much, when assured that the highest authorities in the original MSS. used by Condé himself have been followed with religious exactitude.

When proceeding to give the Chronological Series of the Arab Sovereigns, we found ourselves in a labyrinth from which there could have been little hope of a fortunate issue, had not our Author left us certain intimations, which, although but incomplete, have yet enabled us to add that Series to the present volume. We have furthermore compared it with the List given by Masdeu in the fifteenth volume of his work; but the number of names and appellations bestowed on each monarch, with the fact that these names are frequently applied with numerous variations, have much increased the difficulty of verification, and rendered the danger of error much more imminent. To the learned reader we are, therefore, compelled to refer the rectification of mistakes necessarily arising in a question so inextricably complicated, and we repeat the expression of our hope that the efforts we have made will secure his indulgence.

Madrid, 1820.

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	Year of the Hegira.	A.D.
KINGS OF CORDOVA.		
Gehwar	435	1044
Muhamad Ben Gehwar	452	1060
KINGS OF MALAGA.		
Aly Aben Hamud	408	1016
Alcasen Ben Hamud	415	1024
Yahye Ben Aly	417	1026
Edris Ben Aly		
Alhasen Ben Aly		
Edris Ben Yahye		
Muhamad Almahdi		
Alcasen Almoztali	445	
Zagut Ben Mohamad	479	
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Abulcasim Mohamad Ben Abed	433	
Abu Amru	461	
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KINGS OF TOLEDO.		
Ismail Ben Dylnoun		
Yahye Ben Ismail	469	
Alcadir Billah	471	
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Almondar Ben Yahye	430	
Suleyman Algiuzami	438	

	Year of the Hegina.
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Abdelmelic Abu Meruan	512
Ahmed Abu Giafar Ben Abdelmelik	540

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Abu Mohamad Abdallah	467
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Abderahman Ben Tahir	
Ahmed Abu Abdallah	508
Aben Ayad	540
Muhamad Ben Juzef	540
Alwatik Ben Mohamad	540
Abdallah El Thograi	541
Abu Abdallah Mohamad	569
Abul Hassan Ben Abed	542
Aben Hemsek	560

CONTEMPORARY KINGS OF VALENCIA.

Mudafas, a Sclavonian	400
Mubarik, a Sclavonian	
Lebib, a Sclavonian	452
Abdelaziz Ben Abderahman	
Abdelmelik Ben Abdelaziz	469
Abu Bekar Abdelmelik	478
Yahye Adofar	508
Abu Abdallah Mohamad	569
Aben Hemsek	569
Giomail Ben Zeyan	569

OF SEGURA.

Aben Hemsek	569

ALMORAVIDE KINGS.

Abu Bekar Ben Omar	453
Juzef Ben Taxfin	500
Aly Ben Juzef	534
Taxfin Ben Aly	541

Year of the Hegira.

ALMOHADE KINGS.

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Abderahman Ben Aly	558
Juzef Abu Jakob	580
Jakob Ben Juzef	595
Mohamad Ben Jakob	610
Juzef Ben Mohamad	620
Abdelwaid	621

HISTORY

OF THE

DOMINION OF THE ARABS IN SPAIN.

CHAP. XCVIII.—Of the honours which the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor conferred on men of learning, and of other events.

But a short time only in each year did the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor pass in his expeditions to the frontier: the place which he most commonly made his abode was Cordova, and when there his house was as a sort of academy or place of assemblage for men of learning and genius. Among the many by whom it was frequented, one of the most distinguished was Obada Ben Abdallah Ben Measemai Abu Becri, of Malaga, who was one of the best poetical writers then living in Andalusia. He wrote the History of the Spanish Poets, with a Borda or eulogy on the Anabi* Muhamad, that was much renowned. To obtain permission for paying a visit to the vizier of Muhamad Almanzor, Ahmed Ben Soaid Ben Hezam, Obada composed an extempore copy of verses of singular eloquence, which were much admired by the vizier, who gave him a hundred dinars of gold for the same, and from that moment commanded that his house should be open to the poet at all hours. Another of the eminent persons by whom the house of the Hagib Almanzor was most assiduously frequented, was

* Anabi or Nabi, Prophet.

Abdelwariz Ben Sofein; but there were besides many others from the most illustrious families of Cordova, who were constantly to be found there.

Muhamad Almanzor likewise established an academy or school for the tongues, wherein the most learned men, and those already known for the production of useful or ingenious works in the various branches of erudition, were alone permitted to hold chairs. The Hagib was a diligent visitor to the Aljamas, the colleges, and the Madrisas or schools for youth, where he would seat himself among the students and disciples, not suffering that the course of instruction should be interrupted either by his entrance or departure. To those who most distinguished themselves in these institutions he gave prizes; and that not to the students only, but to the masters also. By this his acquaintance with the students, or by the means here described, the Hagib always knew where to find the person he required when a choice was about to be made of learned Cadies for the principal Aljamas of the kingdom, or if an election were taking place of Mocries and Alchatibes, who are readers and preachers for the mosques.

The King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah continued meanwhile to live in the retirement of his different palaces, and to amuse himself among the delicious gardens that surrounded those residences. None could visit him without the permission of the Sultana mother, or of the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah Ben Abi Amer. He was never named unless it were in the Chotba or public prayer of the Juma; that weekly mention, with his name on the Coin and on certain Inscriptions, being the sole evidence of his existence. When the young sovereign repaired to the Pascuas, the Easter solemnities that is to say, or other festivals celebrated in the mosques, he never came forth from the Macsura* until every other person had left the

* The Macsura was a tribune or gallery but slightly raised above the pavement, placed in the principal part of the mosque; it was surrounded by a grating formed of gilt rods, and here the kings took their place when they appeared at the Zala or public prayers. In all the Mosques, the boys were placed behind the old men, and the women behind the boys; by whom they were entirely separated from the men. At the close of the worship, the men remained to wait until all the

building, when he also departed, but so closely surrounded by his attendants and guard, that none could behold his person, and he was thus reconducted to his Alcazar, which was at no great distance from the mosque, almost without the people having remarked or been aware of his presence.

Now, from the year 365, Alhassan Ben Kenuz had remained at the court of Nasar Ben Maad, the Soldan of Egypt, to which he had retired, as has been related, after leaving that of the King Alhakem Almostansir Billah, at Cordova. It was now the year 373, and the Soldan Ben Maad wrote letters to his General Balkim Ben Zeiri Ben Menad, who governed Africa in his name, commanding him to favour the enterprises of Alhassan in the land of Magreb. With these letters, Alhassan Ben Kenuz repaired to the city of Tunis, where he was received with much honour by Balkim Ben Zeiri, who had no sooner read the letters of the Soldan, than he made instant preparations for paying obedience to the tenor of the same. He furnished Alhassan with three thousand horse, and this force being increased by the adherence to his party of several Cabilas from different parts of Barbary, Alhassan Ben Kenuz entered Almagreb, when he was proclaimed sovereign in many of the towns.

Intelligence of these things having been sent to Cordova, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor instantly despatched a select body of cavalry, conducted by his vizier Abu Alhakem Omar Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, to whom he gave the government of Almagreb, with that of all its dependencies. Alhassan, on his part, had no sooner been made acquainted with the approach of the armament bearing these troops, than he hastened to the coast, met the Andalusians on their landing, and attacking them at once, a sanguinary conflict ensued, which was maintained for some time with equal obstinacy on both sides. But Alhassan was at length the conqueror; defeating the Andalusian forces, he compelled them to retreat, and they hastened to take refuge in Medina Cebta, where Alhassan besieged them for some days. Abu Alhakem Omar then wrote an account of his misfortune to Cordova, when the Hagib Almanzor

women had disappeared. No maiden went to a mosque where there was not a place set apart for the reception of the virgins; and every woman was carefully wrapped up and covered with her veils.—*Condé.*

sent his own son, Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, who, although very young, was already highly esteemed for his qualities as a military leader. He now hastened with all speed to the assistance of Abu Alhakem, who was his uncle, having been furnished by the Hagib with a well-appointed army for that purpose.

Muhamad Almanzor himself had meanwhile proceeded once more into the East of Spain with a very powerful host: marching at the head of the Cordovan cavalry, he passed by Garnata, Baza, Lorca, and Tadmir, remaining for some time in the last-named city, where he hoped to be joined by the forces of Algarve and others whom he had commanded to be brought to him by the ships of that coast.

Here Muhamad Almanzor was entertained in the house of the Amil or governor of the city, Ahmed Ben Alchiteb Ben Dagim, who during the three and twenty days of the Hagib's abode in his dwelling, daily feasted all the generals and other cavaliers by whom Almanzor was accompanied, and that most splendidly: nay, the horses and servants who were in attendance on those nobles were in like manner fed at the cost of the governor.

For the principal personages among his guests, Ahmed Ben Alchiteb caused the most delicate baths of rose-water to be prepared, expending a profusion of rich perfumes and aromatic essences, moreover, during every meal, and at all the assemblies in his apartments of those highly honoured visitors. Each person was supplied with a commodious and pleasant chamber, having a bed covered with precious stuffs of silk and gold: at a word, the entertainment was in every respect most princely.

When the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was about to take his departure from the house of that magnificent host, he said to the latter, in the presence of all his generals and cavaliers, "Of a truth, Ahmad Ben Alchiteb, thou dost not know how to lodge men whose occupation is war, and I shall take care to send none of the troops thy way when they are proceeding to the frontier, or bound for Algihed:* the repose of such men should be fighting, and their best ornaments are their arms. Yet to a man of such liberality and so generous a heart, the treatment of a mere tax-paying

* The sacred war.

vassal is by no means suited, and therefore, in the name of our lord the King Hixem Ben Alhakem, I make thee free of all tribute for the remainder of thy life." This happened on the twelfth day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 374.

We find it related, that when the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer Almanzor departed from Cordova for this expedition, there went forth with him Abu Omar Ahmed Ben Chateb, called Alhazin, and that this man entertained the Hagib, with all his company, at his houses on the way, as he did at his dwelling in Murcia, when the latter was proceeding on the expedition to Barcelona, causing him to be there met and received by Aben Soheid, Prefect of the Asadaca, and by all the principal persons of the city. The son of this Alhazin, called Abulasbaz Muza, entertained in like manner Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, the son of the Hagib Muhamad, with all his cavaliers and followers, in a journey, during which the latter passed through Murcia, and for these causes both father and son were rendered free of the gates of Cordova, a privilege which had once before been granted to their house by the Meruans. Yet in these days, that illustrious family is living in some remote part—God only knows the place—miserable and despised like the most wretched of Alarabes. But doth not Allah see all things?

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, in his History of the Alameries, gives us to know that the march of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor upon Barcelona took place in the year 375, being the twenty-third expedition undertaken by that leader. He directed his steps towards the East of Spain, by Elvira and Basta to Tadmir, and at Murcia, which is the seat of the Alcaides of Tadmir, he was entertained as aforesaid in the house of Aben Chateb, where, according to the same Aben Hayan, he remained thirteen days, all his servants and cavaliers daily receiving bread, flesh, and fruit at their Posadas from the same liberal hand. To Muhamad Almanzor and his generals, the splendid feasts presented each day, with conserves and fruits of every kind, were matter of marvel. When the Hagib, being about to leave the city, was informed by his viziers and the masters of accounts that Aben Chateb had supplied all their wants, he returned thanks in the name of their lord, the King Hixem Ben Alhakem; and on his return to Cordova,

relating the facts to the young sovereign, he proposed that Chateb and his family should be freed from the payment of all tributes. Almanzor furthermore invited Aben Chateb to the capital, where he paid him great honours, and gave him the name of the Hospitable. On his departure, the Hagib presented to him a beautiful slave for his palace, when Aben Chateb returned well content to his Amilia or government of Tadmir, where all his rights and privileges were preserved to him.

Writing on the same subject, Ahu Becri Ahmed Ben Sind Ben Abilfayadh informs us, in that history of his which was translated into Hebrew, that for the campaign of Barcelona the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor departed from Cordova on the thirteenth day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 374, which was the fifth of May Anno Domini 984. He adds, that from Elvira, Almanzor went to Basta, Lorca, and Murcia, where he was lodged during three and twenty days in the house of Ahmed Ben Dagim Ben Chateb, and in that of his son Abulaswaz Muza Ben Ahmed, not a man of his train spending a Dirhem. Meats and fruits of various excellence were daily served to Almanzor in precious vessels, while his bath was perfumed with delicious rose-water; and the Hagib, astonished at this magnificence, gave thanks to his host, whom he confirmed in his Amilia, and whose hospitality he celebrated in many praises on his return to Cordova.

In that campaign, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was accompanied by Omaya Ben Galib, called the Morori, from his native place Moror, a man of distinguished genius in poetry, who celebrated the generosity of Ahmed Ben Dagim the Tadmiri, in very elegant verses.

On his march, the Hagib Almanzor assembled many troops, both cavalry and foot-soldiers, from Valencia, Tortosa, and Tarragona, whith whom he proceeded to the plains of Barcelona. The King of Afranc * came forth against him with a vast army, but though his people were double

* This King of Afranc, or of the Franks, was Borel, Count of Barcelona. All the region of the Pyrenees, with its valleys and declivities, was then divided into small lordships, and this on the Spanish as well as on the French side. These rulers were all called by our Arabs kings and iords of Afranc.—*Condé.*

those of the Moslemah in number, yet, by the ability of Almanzor and the aid of God, the valour of the Faithful prevailed: they readily broke and routed that multitude of rude hill-people, who never fight well in the plains, more especially when they have some place of refuge near them; seeing that, in this case, they soon seek their safety in flight. They now fled in much disorder to the city of Barcelona, where they were besieged by the Moslemah with such ardour and persistence, that the Lord of Afranc, not hoping to defend the place successfully, and seeing no prospect of succour, fled secretly by sea, which he did in the night-time, the darkness preventing the ships of Algarve, which guarded the shore, from perceiving his bark; and so that obscurity favoured his escape. Two days afterwards, the city surrendered on conditions agreed to by all the inhabitants, receiving security for their lives, but paying the tribute of blood* for every head among them.

The frontier being secured, Muhamad Almanzor returned to Cordova by the centre of Spain, dismissing the troops of Valencia and Tadmir, and visiting on his way various cities of the kingdom, in all of which he left the memory of his passage by the works which he commanded to be executed for the security, convenience, and advantage of each.

When the Hagib arrived in Cordova, one of his first acts was to appoint a man, of whose reputation for learning he had heard much discourse, to be Prefect of Azala, or Chief Priest in the Mosque of King Hixem. This was Said Ben Edris Ben Yahye, called El Salemi, Mocri or reader of the Aljama of Seville, a learned person who had travelled in the East, had made his Alhig, or sacred pilgrimage, and was admired for his excellences and virtues, no less than for his erudition. He was besides endowed with a fine and sonorous voice. In that office Said Ben Edris remained until the breaking out of the civil war, when he returnd to Seville, and there died full of days and honour, at the end of the year 428.

Meanwhile, Alhassan Ben Kenuz, who still kept the General Omar Ben Abdallah besieged in Cebta, receiving intelligence

* The tribute of blood was always a heavy sum.—*Condé.*

of the departure of Abdelmelic, the son of Muhamad Almanzor, from Cordova, and knowing that he was approaching to attack his own forces in Almagreb, instantly gave himself up for lost, and ill-advised as he was, resolved to yield his destiny to the hands of his foes. He therefore wrote to Omar Ben Abdallah, requesting that general to give him a safe-conduct for himself and his family, declaring that he had determined to pass over into Spain, and commit himself to the mercy of King Hixem Ben Alhakem. Omar at once replied as Alhassan had desired, and despatched intelligence to Abdelmelic, the son of Almanzor, of the wish thus expressed; then Abdelmelic, referring the matter, by swift Forenicos or couriers, to his father, the latter commanded him to complete the negociation without delay, assuring to Alhassan Ben Kenuz whatever securities he could desire, and recommending that Ameer to repair with all speed to Cordova.

All this was then done as had been commanded by Muhamad Almanzor, and the Prince Alhassan Ben Kenuz immediately passed over into Andalusia, whereupon the Hagib was apprised of his arrival by his son Abdelmelic. But when Almanzor found that Alhassan Ben Kenuz was in his power, he wrote an order to his son, declaring that the service of King Hixem demanded the life of that prince; wherefore, in despite of the solemn promise and safe-conduct given to Alhassan, his head was taken off, in the plain near Alcazar El Ocab, in the territory of Tarifa.

Men say, that at the moment when the betrayed prince was beheaded, there arose a sudden and violent wind, which, taking the vestment from the shoulders of Alhassan, carried it off, and the mantle disappearing immediately could never be discovered again. Those of his household and his disconsolate family then interred his body, while the cavaliers entrusted with that office by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor repaired with the head to Cordova. This was done in the moon of Giumada Primera, and in the year 375.

The government of Alhassan Ben Kenuz had lasted sixteen years during the first period of his rule—from the year 347 to the year 364, that is to say; but in the second period it endured one year and nine months only. The family

left by Prince Alhassan established itself in Cordova, partly near the Aljama of Magarawa, and partly in the divan of the king, where they remained until the race of Omeya had ceased to bear sway, and Abu Ben Hamad had commenced his rule in Cordova, when the memory of that illustrious family began to revive.

With the death of Alhassan Ben Kenuz, the house of Edris became extinct in Almagreb. The dynasty had commenced its reign in the year 172, and on Thursday, the seventh day of Rebie Primera, on which day the oath of allegiance was taken in Medina Velita to Edris Ben Abdallah Ben Hassan. From that time until the day when Alhassan Ben Kenuz was treacherously assassinated, which was in Giumada of the year 375, there had elapsed 202 years and five months; that, therefore, was the tenor of duration assigned in the eternal decrees to the rule of the sons of Edris, and so long did their empire remain.

The extent of territory ruled by the princes of the extinguished family was from Sas Alacsa to Medina Wahran; the capital thereof was the city of Fez, and at a later period, Medina Biserta. The dominions of the Beni Edris were placed, as it were, in the heart of two powerful dynasties, which surrounded them from east to west, and from west to east. These were the Beni Obeid, lords of Africa, Barca, and Egypt, who were on the east, and the Beni Omeyas, lords of Spain and Almagreb, who were their neighbours on the west. For this cause the house of Edris lived in almost perpetual wars and disquietudes, being now masters of nearly all Almagreb, and anon reduced to the lordship of a few fortresses only, such as Azila, Hijar Anosor, and Biserta, with the distant holds about Telencen, until at length their sovereignty concluded as hath been related. God alone is eternal: He only is the Lord of a perpetual dominion.

For the better adornment of the Aljama of Fez, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor now commanded that an Alcoba or chapel should be erected in the centre of the great court, where the old tower had previously stood. It was constructed on columns with a cupola, on the summit of which was placed a talisman, similar to that upon the cupola of the chapel of the Mihrab. This talisman was of

a kind which the ancients well knew how to make, and resembled those formed in the time of the Xiyei: it was raised on a bar of iron fixed into the centre of the cupola.

These talismans were made by the ancients for various purposes, but this one was of that kind called Alfar, or of the Rat; and after it had been placed in its destined position, there never was any rat found in the Aljama; for if by chance one of those animals did run in, it could not remain, but died at once, as was soon afterwards discovered in each case that occurred. There was besides another talisman, called the Acrab or that of the Scorpion, and by the means of that one, all scorpions were prevented from entering the Aljama; nor was there one ever seen there. Of these facts there are many credible witnesses, as, for example, the Alfagui Aben Harnu. The talisman, which was placed on the column of pale yellow-coloured metal, had the form of a Haya or Serpent, and no serpent was ever known to enter the Aljama.

All knowledge of this kind is the gift of the genii.

There were many works executed by the command of Almudafar Abdelmelic, the son of Almanzor; among others, was the hospital, which he caused to be supplied with pure water for drinking, by means of a magnificent aqueduct, bringing the stream from the Wadilhassan, which runs without the city at the iron gate. He likewise commanded that an Alminbar or pulpit should be prepared for the Aljama, and the material of this was ebony, richly carved and adorned with costly workmanship. To the Alminbar was appended the following inscription:—

"In the name of God the Clement, the Merciful.

"May God bless Muhamad, and all the followers that he hath given him, with a perfect felicity.

"This work hath been executed by command of the victorious Caliph, the Sword of Islam, the servant of Allah, Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah, whose days may God prolong, and by the hands of his Hagib, Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Muhamad Almanzor Ben Abi Amer. May God the Highest maintain his prosperity. The work was completed in the moon of Giumada Postrera and the year 375.

The affairs of Almagreb having been thus quietly settled, Muhamad Almanzor renewed his incursions on the territory of Gallicia, even before the year 375 had closed. He devastated the Comarcas, laid siege to Medina Coyanca, which he took by assault, and the walls of which he caused to be destroyed; then, availing himself of the aid lent him by certain of the principal men among the Christians, who had come to him as fugitives, and who marched in his company, the Hagib, eager to profit by the internal disorders of the country, advanced even to the Marismas or marshy plains of Gallicia, and plundered the church of Zacum, wherein he found treasures innumerable, of all which he made prey.

In the course of that autumn Muhamad Almanzor cut up and laid waste the lands of Nahara, and penetrated into the Albaskense mountains. On his return he chastised the people of Uxama, Alcoba, and Atincia, who had risen in revolt, and repaired to Cordova once more. When all this was done, it was found that his people were overloaded with the immense amount of their booty.

It was on this occasion that the learned man and accomplished poet, Zeyadatala Ben Aly, presented to the Hagib his book called the Kiteb Alhimâm; the subject being Death, and the work consisting of verses filled with profound thought, expressed in singularly fine language.

At this time Almanzor appointed Ahmed Ben Hakem Ben Muhamad El Ameri, known as Aben Lebâna of Cordova, to be Cadi of Toledo. He had previously been Wali Xuri of the capital, and was a man of much reputation for learning as well as integrity. The Hagib bestowed his former office on Ahmed Ben Abdelaziz Ben Fareg Ben Abi El Habeb, also a Cordovan of great erudition, and formerly the preceptor of his son Abdelmelic Almudafar.

In the same year of 375, Muhamad Almanzor, receiving intelligence to the effect that Balkim Ben Teiri had made an irruption upon the territory of Almagreb, at once commanded that the General Ascaleha should depart for that country with a force composed in part of Andalusians, but the remainder being natives of Africa. Arrived at Medina Fez, they besieged that city, and having taken it, the Chotba, or public prayer, for the Omeyas of Spain, which had been

interrupted by the pretensions of the Zeiries of Sanhaga, was once again made in the mosques.

Yet the whole of the city was not brought into subjection, seeing that Muhamad Ben Omar of Mekinez still remained in the quarter of the Alcairvanes, which he held for the Obeides, and ruled as their Amil: nor was it until the following year that the troops of Andalusia succeeded in obtaining possession of that quarter.

CHAP. XCIX.—Of the nuptials of the son of Almanzor, and of certain events in Almagreb.

In the beginning of the year 376, there came to Andalusia a man who was much renowned for his learning, and had on that account been invited by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor to read in the Aljama of Cordova. This was Ahmed Ben Aly Arabei El Begani, to whom Almanzor entrusted the education of his son Abderahman, and soon afterwards made him Cadi,—Ahmed being then in the thirty-sixth year of his age.

In the spring of this year the nuptials of Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, with Habiba, daughter of Abdallah Ben Yahye Ben Abi Amer, were solemnized in Cordova, as were those of Boriha, who was the daughter of Almanzor. There were great feastings and public rejoicings on that occasion: the wedding festival was held in the beautiful gardens of the Almunia called Alameria, and situated close to the Alcazars of the Zahriya, those gardens having been presented by King Hixem to his Hagib Almanzor when the latter went to ask his permission to celebrate these nuptials therein.

All the nobles of Cordova took part in the rejoicings made on that occasion. The graceful bride was conducted in triumph through the principal streets of the city, being accompanied by all the damsels belonging to such houses as were friends of the family: the train was preceded and followed by the Cadi and the witnesses, with the principal Xeques, great lords, and noble cavaliers of the city. Arrived at the gardens, those damsels, each holding an ivory wand

inlaid with gold in her hand, stood to guard the pavilion of the bride all the day, and at nightfall, the bridegroom, attended by a large number of noble youths, belonging to his family and those of the friends of his house, approached the entrance of the same, protected by the gilded swords of his attendant followers, when, despite the feigned defence made by the damsels, he succeeded in forcing the entrance.

The gardens were splendidly illuminated: amidst all the groves, around every fountain, and in the barks on the crystal lakes, by which they were beautified, delightful music sounded through the night, with songs, of which the praises of the newly-married pair formed the subject: these songs and the music endured all night, as hath been said, nor ceased until the hour of dawn, the rejoicings continuing throughout the whole of the following day.

Among the verses sung by the damsels on this occasion, those most applauded were the Canzonets written by Abu Hafs Ben Ascaleha, and by Abu Taher El Esturconi.

Precious gifts of rich vestments and costly arms were distributed by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor among his guards, at the celebration of those nuptials, and he gave large alms to the poor of the Zawiyas:* he married many orphan-girls of his Aljama likewise, endowing them with suitable dowries; and made handsome presents to the men of genius, by whom his son and grand-daughter, the bridegroom and bride of that auspicious day, had been celebrated in verse. A more brilliant festivity than this was never seen in Cordova, nor had there ever been any walimas or nuptial-feasts of greater magnificence.

In the moon Xaban of the year 376, Yahye Ben Malic Ben Ayadh, coming forth from the Aljama of Cordova after the prayer of nightfall, and being accompanied by several of his friends, proceeded towards his own house, where having arrived, they all entered into the spacious court, and seated themselves amidst the stately orange-trees and jasmines by which it was surrounded. While

* The Zawiyas were hospitals for professed beggars: each of them was governed by a Wakil, or steward, whose duty it was to superintend the maintenance and police of the institution.—*Condé.*

they were thus reposing, Yahye begged that one of them called Aben Abi Hebâb would sing for the company certain verses composed by Mungmi, which they had both heard when abiding together at Bagdad. Aben Hebâb sang them accordingly, and presently afterwards, taking his leave of Yahye, he wished him long life, with forgetfulness of the last fatal term, whereunto his friends having responded duly, and the usual compliments having been made, Aben Hebâb departed.

But he had not arrived at the end of the street in which the dwelling of Yahye stood, before he heard himself called by name, and returning to the place he had left, he found the friend to whom he had just wished long life, dead on his divan.

Yahye Ben Malic was one of the most learned as well as most generous men of those times, and was a distinguished philosopher: he had travelled much in India, in all parts of the East, in divers cities of Asia and Egypt, and in his native country of Spain. His death was lamented by all the good, and his bier was accompanied to the grave by many illustrious personages: El Jaboki, the Cadi of the Aljama, made the prayer for Yahye Ben Malic.

In Almagreb, the General Ascaleha was meanwhile occupied in the fulfilment of the commission entrusted to him by the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, and his troops having been joined by those of Abu Bies, called El Jatût Ben Balkin El Magaravi, they proceeded in company to Fez, where they obtained possession of that half of the city which had still held out,—the quarter of the Alcairvanes, namely; its governor, Muhamad Ben Amer, of Mekinez, having first been slain fighting in defence of its gates. The Andalusians then caused King Hixem Ben Alhakem to be proclaimed sovereign, and to avoid angering those troops, Jatût Ben Balkin agreed to let it be done peaceably, although not without reluctance. Intelligence of the advantage thus obtained was then sent to Cordova, where it was celebrated with much rejoicing.

The following year brought a grievous plague of locusts on all the land of Almagreb. In the first months of that year the lord of the Zenete Cabilas, Zeiri Ben Atia El Ma-

garavi, called also El Chazeri, came to Fez, where he was received by Ascaleha and Abu Bies, called Jatût Ben Balkin El Magaravi.

Cruel wars were meanwhile raging in the province of Africa between Abulbehar Ben Zeiri Ben Menad, of Sanhaga, and his nephew, Mansur Ben Balkin, Lord of Tunis; for the latter, abandoning the party of Spain, and separating himself from that friendship which his father had accepted from the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, had proclaimed the Obeida sovereigns in all his states; whereupon Abulbehar had entered those provinces, and subjugating the towns, had caused the Omeyas of Spain to be proclaimed from every Alminbar. That general also took possession of the city of Mehadia, with others of the district of Zaub; and in each he commanded that the Chotba should be made for King Hixem, which was done accordingly; nor there only, but in all the provinces of Africa and Almagreb.

This intelligence was despatched without delay to Cordova, and was celebrated there in like manner with much rejoicing, the Hagib Almanzor sending to Abulbehar the title of Ameer for all the provinces he held in his power, with a present of beautiful horses, to which he added the sword and vestments of an Ameer, all of the most costly workmanship, and adorned with very precious ornaments.

But scarcely had Abulbehar received these titles, when he changed his allegiance, and, without any known cause or conceivable motive, declared himself to be under the protection of the Obeidas, to whom he proffered his obedience, and forbade the Chotba for King Hixem to be any longer made in the mosques.

When the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was made acquainted with the perfidious levity of which Abulbehar Ben Zeiri had thus given proof, he wrote letters in all haste to Zeiri Ben Atia, charging him to take vengeance for those acts of contempt, and authorizing him to occupy and hold possession of all the provinces, whether in Africa or Zaub, of which Abulbehar then had command. To this Zeiri made reply, declaring that he would make a cruel war on Abulhebar, and would not cease from the same until he had despoiled that changeling both of state and life.

The Hagib himself was meanwhile invading Castile and Gallicia; he destroyed Oxma, burnt Alcoba to the ground, and, returning by Atincia, demolished the walls of that city.

In these campaigns Muhamad Almanzor was accompanied by the two most eminent men of genius at that time in Spain,—these were Abu Amer Ahmed Ben Derag El Castali of Cazalla, who was Alchatib of the Divan to the Ata, or treasury of war; and Abu Meruan Abdelmelic Ben Edris, who was known as Aben Harizi.

In the year 378, Abderahman Almudafar, the son of Almanzor, repaired to the frontiers of eastern Spain, and attacking the people of Afranc, who had descended from their mountains in great numbers, he defeated them with heavy loss on their side. Having assured the tranquillity of the frontier, he then returned to Cordova, loaded with riches, seeing that the spoil made had been enormous. On that march the general was accompanied by Muhamad Ben Abi Husam of Tadmir, a virtuous man of austere life, who had travelled long and extensively in Asia, Africa, and other parts.

In the year following, the Hagib Almanzor once more directed his arms against the frontier of Gallicia, and occupied Medina Colimbria. He then proceeded to Santyac, which he also took, and razed the walls thereof to their foundations. Many captives and much spoil were taken on that occasion also; and Muhamad returned to Cordova in triumph, paying visits to the cities of Talavera and Toledo on his way thither.

Nor had Zeiri Ben Atia remained idle in Africa. With his troops of the Zenete Cabilas, and other tribes from Barbary, he joined the Andalusian forces, and proceeded to march against Abulbehar Ben Zeiri; but the latter did not venture to wait his approach, and constantly flying before him, took shelter at length with his nephew, Mansur Ben Balkin, with whom but a short time before he had been waging a war of extermination, but to whose hands he now abandoned all his rights, and resigned the defence of his states.

Aben Atia was meanwhile so fortunate in that campaign as to gain early possession of Medina Telencen and all its

dependencies; after which, he soon made himself master of the territories which had been the lordship of Abulbehar, thus extending his states from Sas Alacsa to Zaub, and beyond the confines of Almagreb. He then despatched Forenicos or couriers with intelligence of these events to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; and soon after this news of victory, he likewise sent Muhamad very costly presents, which arrived in Spain towards the close of the year. Among other objects composing that magnificent gift, were a hundred generous* horses of noble race; fifty large camels for the transport of baggage: a thousand lances of the fabric of Lamta, a great quantity of beautifully made bows, with an equally large supply of handsome quivers, filled with carefully pointed arrows, scimitars, and other weapons of the finest temper, likewise made part of that rich present. To these things were added several giraffes, with other wild beasts and rare birds from Lybia, the deserts of Lamta, and other regions; as were many sumpter mules laden with bales of delicate cloths, woven of the finest wool and exquisitely embroidered, and a thousand loads of dried fruits, all of different kinds and the most carefully selected qualities.

All these things gratified Almanzor very highly; and the Hagib wrote to Zeiri Ben Atia, thanking him on his own part and in the name of the King Hixem Ben Alhakem. He also renewed the compact of protection previously made with Zeiri Ben Atia, attaching no other conditions thereto save only those of obedience and respect. These presents did not reach Cordova from the coast until the commencement of the year 381, the day of their arrival happening to be one when there was a great festival held in the city.

During this year, one of the principal cavaliers of Andalusia, Abu Abdallah Ben Abed, departed from Seville and repaired to the East, taking in his company Said Ben Raxic of Cordova, called Abu Othman, a very learned and religious man, whose object it was to perform this pilgrimage to the holy houses, and who in the course of that peregri-

* Let the English reader accept the original expression of the Arabic writer in this case, and the rather as he will admit that the epithet is often less appropriately bestowed.

nation held intercourse with all the most erudite masters of the East. Both these cavaliers were constant frequenters of those academical conferences which were held in the house of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, and the president of which was the accomplished Ibrahim Ben Nazor, El Saracusti, or, as we should say, of Saragossa. It was he who proposed the various subjects to be discussed in those assemblies, and held the principal part therein. His contemporaries and those of that age called him Malic Ben Anas. He was one of the most learned Mufties of the Aljama of Cordova.

On a certain Saturday in that same year, and it was the twelfth day of the moon Ramazan, Said Ben Othman Ben Meruan El Coraixi, known as Aben Bolita, presented to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, a Casida, or long composition of very elegant verses, written in his praise, the subject being the past campaigns and brilliant victories of that leader. The members of the Academy read it that day in one of those assemblies before alluded to, with great applause from all present. The poem contained a hundred verses; and the following day Almanzor presented Said Ben Othman with three hundred doubloons of gold, which were sent to his house in purses wrapped in cloth of silver.

The fame enjoyed by the learned men of Spain, and more particularly those of Cordova, having extended into other countries, many travellers from all lands were attracted thereby, and came not only from Egypt, Africa, Syria, the Iraks and Persia, but from the country of Roum, from Afranc, and from Gallicia. In the year preceding 380, there came to Cordova Said Ben Hassan El Rebai, known as Abulola, a man distinguished for his knowledge of languages, and learned in all other sciences. He was a native of Diar Musul, had studied in Bagdad, and was considered to be one of the best poets of his time. Charitable and humane, Said Ben Hassan was remarked for the grace of his demeanour and his affability of manners; the Hagib Almanzor honoured him greatly, and loaded him with benefits, assigning him his appointments from the fund destined to the service of the learned. But this income did not suffice him, because the disposition of Said Ben Hassan was to give freely, and he was of expensive

habits. It is even said that this Abulola proved himself not a little eager for gifts, and sufficiently astute in the practice of obtaining such by his verse and the graces of his manner; nor did he ever lose an occasion for procuring favours and rewards.

One day the crafty Rebai entered the Maglisa of Almanzor clothed in a worn-out mantle, so thin and dilapidated that it permitted the vestments beneath to be seen, although the day was one of more than common importance, when a large concourse of the learned and distinguished persons composing those assemblies was expected. "How is this, Abulola?" enquired the Hagib, perceiving him to present himself in that unseemly plight. "This garment that thou seest," replied Said Ben Hassan, in a plaintive and humble tone, "was the gift of our sovereign, whom God preserve; and as I have no gala dress more valuable than this—may God reward the giver,—so I have put it on." "Thou hast done well," replied Almanzor. "But, to the end that a mantle so precious may not be worn out by too frequent service, to-morrow I will take care to send thee other vestments for festal occasions, and thou canst then preserve this as it merits."

This learned man dedicated many books to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; as, for example, the Kiteb Fusûs, or book of topazes; the Nueder Welgarib, an exposition of the work of Abu Aly El Cali, the "Book of the Proverbs and Fables," one called "A Treatise on the Deeps," and another on Military Tactics, which last pleased the Hagib greatly. There were besides others of consi derable merit. Said Ben Hassan was remarkable for his promptness in reply. He gave himself little trouble as to the truth or correctness of what he said, but uttered the words that first came to his lips. We find it related of him that he one day entered the palace to pay a visit to Almanzor at a moment when the Hagib held in his hands a work on the laying out and cultivation of gardens, which had just been presented to him by Mabroman Ben Boreid, the Amil of a certain town in Spain, but which was at some distance from the capital. In this work, there is mention of the Calab and the Tarbil, which are names or terms indicating the inequalities of the ground before it has been

sown. When Said Ben Hassan appeared, the Hagib said to him, "Abulola!" and he made answer: "Labaika ye mulena"—"What wills my lord?" Then enquired Almanzor and said: "Among the many books that pass through thy hands, hast thou seen that of the Cûelib and the Rûelib of Mabroman Ben Boreid?" To which Said Ben Hassan replied: "Yes, my lord, I saw it at Bagdad, in the copy of Abu Becri Ben Daweid. It was in letters like the foot of the ant, had such and such figures upon the sides, and contained so and so, this thing and that." Whereupon the Hagib exclaimed: "Dost thou not shame thyself, Abulola, to lie thus! This book hath just been written in such a place by such an author, and treats of so and so." But Abulola still maintained that although he could not deny the truth of all that had been advanced by the Hagib, yet that what he had himself said was none the less true. This Said Ben Hassan was Alchatib, or preacher, in the mosque of the Aljama Azahira of Cordova.

Zeiri Ben Atia had meanwhile made good his seat in Fez, where he had established many of his friends and partizans, while to others he assigned possessions in the Comarca, where he settled many of his servants and followers. In the year 382, he received letters from the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, enjoining him to repair to the capital, the King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah having appointed him to be Wali of Cordova. Without loss of time, Ben Atia then put himself on the way, leaving his son Almaan to manage the affairs of government in his place, and commanding him to fix his residence at Telencen. Zeiri likewise made Abderahman Ben Abdelkerim Ben Thalaba, Sahib of the Barrio or quarter of the Andalusians; while he appointed Aly Ben Muhamad Casim Ben Aly Ben Cusûs to hold the same office in that of the Alcairvanes. As Cadi of both quarters, he named the learned Alfaqui, Abu Muhamad Casim Ben Amer, El Lesdi.

These matters all arranged, Zeiri Ben Atia departed for Cordova, taking with him many valuables and presents of great cost, such as jewels, fine furniture, and other rarities. He furthermore loaded many beasts of burthen with the strange birds added by his liberal hand to that present, and of which there were some that had been taught to speak

the tongues of Barbary, the Algarabia,* and others. Lions, panthers, and zebras, in great cages of iron, with camels and civet cats, were among the objects transported into Spain by Zeiri Ben Atia, as were also dates of very rare kinds, such as those of Azarfan, with nuts as large as great goblets. He had in his company three hundred cavaliers of his family and kindred, with a train of three hundred esquires all carefully selected for that honour.

When Muhamad Almanzor was made acquainted with the approach of Zeiri Ben Atia, he prepared for him a very pompous reception, and lodged him in the Alcazar of the Hagib Giafar. King Hixem received him with much distinction, granting him honours and immunities of the most distinguished favour. The Hagib Muhamad had commanded that the title of Vizier Quibir should be conferred on the guest, and all seemed proceeding most amicably. Yet in the midst of all these compliments and delicate exchanges of courtesy, there grew up offence and enmity between Almanzor and Ben Atia, who could indeed not fail to see each other with unfriendly eyes, since it was not in the nature of things that two men so great and so proud could live in contact with any hope of union.

No long time had elapsed, therefore, before Zeiri Ben Atia requested permission from the King Hixem El Muyad Billah to return to Africa, whence he had received notices which caused him to hasten his departure. The king dismissed him to his Amilia accordingly, and, at parting, the Hagib Almanzor required him to renew those compacts of homage for the states of Magreb to which Ben Atia had previously agreed, as also for whatever else he had acquired in those provinces.

When Zeiri Ben Atia had crossed the sea and landed in the territory of Tangier, he laid his hand on his brow and said, "At length I comprehend for what reason Muhamad Almanzor invited me to Cordova;" and when, in the making of the Chotba, there were some who named him as the

* A sort of mixed language spoken at the period in question in all the provinces of Spain—a kind of Lingua Franca. The word has become obsolete, but may still be heard occasionally. It now means "jargon."—TR.

Vizier Quibir, which was the title given to him in the capital, he exclaimed, "Not Vizier! by Allah, not Vizier! but Ameer, and Son of Ameer:" nor did he take pains to conceal that he had returned malcontent with the Hagib, but declared openly that his voyage had proved Muhamad Almanzor to be unlike what fame had reported of him.

During the absence of Zeiri in Spain, affairs in Africa had not remained as he had left them. The Ameer Jadoc Ben Jali El Yaferini had invaded his territories with a powerful army, had entered Fez by surprise, and, although opposed by those of the Andalusian Quarter, had forced the gates of that Barrio, and during the moon Dylcada, in the year 382, had obtained possession of the whole city. With this fact Zeiri Ben Atia was made acquainted on his landing in Tangiers, and he forthwith prepared to march against the invader. Many battles were then fought between them, with varying fortune, for Jadoc Ben Jali was an able general, as well as a brave man; he was, besides, incited by the desire to avenge his father's death, and his troops, who were of the Cabilas of Yafur, were exceedingly valiant and well inured to war. Zeiri prevailed in the end, nevertheless: he defeated the forces of Jador, and meeting himself in the mêlée, he slew him and cut off his head, which he sent to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who was then at Cordova, at the commencement of the year 382. After this victory, Zeiri Ben Atia remained the undisputed master of almost all Magreb, and feared nobody.

In the year 382, and at nightfall of Thursday the third day of the moon Xaval, a poetical tournament or controversy was held in the Academy of Humanities, which, as we have said, was accustomed to assemble in the house of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; and on that occasion many excellent compositions in verse were read, to the great satisfaction of the hearers. The subject of some among these productions was the eulogy of King Hixem El Muyad Billah, and of his Hagib Muhamad Almanzor,—those most applauded being the works of the Secretary Ahmed Ben Derag El Casteli, and those of the Vizier Alchatib, Abdelmelic Ben Edris of Algezira, who was called Abu Meruan. There likewise appeared on that occasion the renowned poet, Muhamad Ben Elisai, a man greatly favoured by Almanzor,

and who had in his house a garden of rose-trees which yielded roses in every month of the year; these he sent to the Hagib as a tribute, with many subtle conceits and elegant compliments. The General Jali Ben Ahmed Ben Jali was accustomed to offer a similar act of courtesy to Almanzor; and on one occasion the flowers he sent were accompanied by the following verses:—

"When from my garden fair I send thee roses
Blooming, whate'er the season, all admire
That marvel, and demand if flowery Spring
Her steps hath quickened. "No," they quick reply,
The grateful multitude, "still hold their pace,
The circling seasons, and this miracle
That wakes our wonder, scarce should cause us marvel.
It comes because the power of Great Almanzor
Turns all our life to Spring!"

Another of those who distinguished themselves in that assembly was the learned Ibrahim Ben Muhamad El Axarafi, so called from the place of his birth, seeing that he was born in the Axarafe, on the heights of the Señorio in Seville. He was Alchatib, or preacher, of the Aljama in his native place, but had been invited to Cordova by the Hagib Almanzor. His excellence as a preacher was equal to his ability as a poet. With these eminent men came also Ismael Ben Abderahman, a very learned Cordovan, who had been long in Egypt, but now lived in his native city, where he had fixed his dwelling in the neighbourhood of the Cadi Abulabas Ben Dekuen.

The prize given by the Hagib Muhamad to the successful competitors in these trials of poetical skill, was one hundred gold doubloons, which he had distributed at given times from the first establishment of the academy. He furthermore caused a collection to be made of such poems as he considered to be of merit.

In the numerous campaigns and expeditions made by the Hagib, it was his custom to take with him two or three of these active spirits, and those men were wont to compose their verses beneath the shade of the warlike pavilion, describing the battles delivered, and the various circumstances of each conquest, in graceful song. Thus, to Gallicia and the siege of Santyac, Muhamad Almanzor took

Aben Derag and Abdelmelic El Harizi, poets who emulated each other in the fulness of thought, facility of expression, and elegant polish of their verse.

There was even one occasion wherein El Harizi, on the very night succeeding a great battle, had presented himself to the Hagib with his completed composition, and Almanzor, turning to Aben Derag, enquired of him—"And thou, Aben Derag, couldst thou do the same?" whereupon, between that hour and the dawn of morning, the latter also produced a description of the battle, with that of the march which had preceded it, the country through which the army had passed, and the spot whereon the combat had taken place,—every incident, in short,—even to the most minute; a task which he accomplished to the admiration of all who understood the matter, and who exclaimed in their gladness, "We need not yield to any people when good poets are the question, for, with only our Harizi and Aben Derag, we may safely compete with Habib and Motenabi."

Another distinguished member of this Academy, and one greatly favoured by the Hagib Almanzor, was Ibrahim Ben Edris El Olui Alhasani El Munios, called Mûbal. He produced an admirable composition in eulogy of Ben Hudheil Aben Razia, the lord of certain fortresses in the East, which were called the Santamaria of Aben Razia, who was a particular friend of Muhamad Almanzor.

About this time one of the most brilliant spirits in Spain, Casim Ben Mohamad El Meruani namely, known as El Xibenisi, from the name of his country, had been detained some time in prison by the Cadilcoda; whereupon, becoming wearied of that long detention, Casim wrote a supplication to the Hagib Muhamad, and this being composed in verses of much elegance, did in effect procure him the desired deliverance.

CHAP. C.—Of the incursion made by Almanzor on the territories of Gallicia, and the captivity of the king Garcia.

In the first opening of the spring of the year 384, the Hagib Almanzor assembled his banners of Andalusia, Merida, and

Toledo, and departed with a mighty host of cavalry for the frontiers of Gallicia. He defeated the Christian troops opposing his passage, destroyed the fortresses of the Infidels, and burnt their churches; to say nothing of the large spoils which he took from their towns, and the vast number of the captives whom he bore away, young men and maidens alike.

Having gained the Marismas or marshy plains of Gallicia and Bortecala, Muhamad Almanzor attacked the church of Santyae, which he burnt; but the Christians had themselves despoiled that temple of its riches, and for this the Hagib destroyed the neighbouring city, commanding, moreover, that the bells of the church, which the Infidels had not removed, should be taken to Cordova. He then returned to the capital, which he entered in triumph, preceded by four thousand captives—youths and damsels. The day was one of great festivity in the city of Cordova; and the bells which Almanzor had brought with him were given by him to the Aljama, where they were assigned a place in the court of the building.

At the Easter of the Victims in this year, the Toleic Maron Ben Abderahman was set at liberty, having been in prison sixteen years, according to the sentence pronounced on him for the slaying of his father, as before related. This event was celebrated in numerous verses by the poets of Andalusia; among others, by Nafe Ben Riadhi, of Algezira, and Abderahman Ben Xablae El Hadrami, of Seville, a competitor, in the elegance of his metre, with the renowned Abu Amar Jusuf Ben Harun El Ramedi. This erudite and ingenious Xablae, whom some call Xibrae, is the author who relates of himself the following circumstance as having taken place when he was very old, and he lived, in effect, to a very great age, departing from life but a short time before the accession of the Beni Hamud. He tells us, then, that being in a dream, he beheld himself seated in a Macbora, or cemetery, of very great beauty,—rich in flowers, and shaded by trees of abundant leaf and very green, beneath which El Xablae thought he was laid, amidst bright and odoriferous blossoms. In that cemetery was a sepulchre surrounded by closely planted cypresses and myrtles, amidst which reposed a large company, who were drinking and making much noise, as they reclined on the delicate flowers

and verdant grass. Many gave evidence, in fact, of so extravagant a gladness, that Xablac reproved them, as he thought, for their unbecoming mirth, saying to them, "Is it thus that you obey the wise admonitions? By Allah! profane not by these outcries the honourable place of graves." To which they replied, "Dost thou, then, not know whose grave it is that we surround?" And he made answer, saying that he did not know.

Then said those revellers, "This sepulchre is the resting-place of Abu Aly El Hakem Alhasan Ben Heni, and from the myrtles which overshadow this grave thou shalt not depart, until thou hast offered to him thy eulogy."

"Then it was," adds the learned Xablac, "that I made certain verses which have since become sufficiently known."

In the year 385, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor departed from Cordova to invade the territory of the Christians on the eastern frontier; he was accompanied on that occasion by the Vizier Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, a man wise in counsel and of great experience: Abulola of Mosul, and other illustrious captains, were also of his company. Almanzor's march to the frontier was performed with so much celerity, that before the Christians were made aware of his having left Cordova, he was already on their lands. But the Christians of the Albaskense Mountains and those of Gallicia had united their forces, and were assembling an innumerable multitude, which was led by Garcia Ben Sancho,* King of the Christians of the mountains, a very good cavalier.

It was not the intention of the Christians, as it would appear, to give immediate battle to the Moslemah, but only to impede their march and give time for the arrival of all the troops they expected; but they were attacked without delay by the cavalry of Almanzor, and many sanguinary skirmishes were fought with equal obstinacy on both sides. At length the Christians, having taken up a position in which they had the advantage of being sheltered by certain heights, the Hagib commanded his cavalry to retire, hoping

* In our chronicles this "Garcia Ben Sancho" is called the Conde Garcia Fernandez: "in era 1033, præserunt Mauri Conde Garcia Fernandiz, et fuit obitus ejus die 2, feriæ 4, Kal. Aug." These dates are exact, and are confirmed by the Arabic authorities.—*Condé.*

that the enemy would thus be tempted to descend into the plain.

In the evening of this day, Alhassan Said, of Bagdad, presented a stag bound with cords to Muhamad Almanzor, with a copy of verses, wherein he predicted to him the approach of victory; these were as follows:—

"Thou! my sole refuge, when pale fears assail me—
Thou! my sure aid in every hour of peril—
Thou! shelter of the desolate:—thine arm
Hath been my shield: on me thy hand hath poured
Blessings abundant as the rain that falls
Brightening the meads to verdure, and awaking
Blossom and plant in each rejoicing field.

And God shall be thine aid—the powers of Heaven
Shall combat with thy bands; the misbeliever
Casting before thee prone. Yet had mine eyes
Not seen thy valour, and the power supreme
Of thine all-conquering genius, this faint heart
Now leaping in my bosom, must have quailed
Before the coming perils. But I see thee!
I see thee raging through yon grove of pines,
Where, as two leopards springing on one pard,
The warriors rush to battle. Thou, great lord,
Dost banish all my fear. But for thine arm,
I, wretched creature, was the proud one's prey.
That arm of might hath saved me. Wherefore now
Permit the servant by thy grace advanced
To walk beneath thy shield, this night to offer
The stag thus bound, and not without a cause.

For this is Garcia's self. Here in these bands
Hast thou the son of Sancho!—if mine eyes
Have looked aright,—if Heaven their augury
Hath owned,—then this is Garcia. With the dawn,
That soon shall brighten, comes for us the joy
Of a great day—for thee the pride of conquest.

Be gracious to thy servant; be his offering
Accepted, and his pains are overpaid.
Confusion to thy foes, renowned Almanzor!
Soon on their heads devoted mayst thou pour
The arrows of thy wrath, as rushing rain-clouds
Fall fast and heavily upon the plains.

Almanzor accepted the stag and the verses with infinite pleasure, and rejoiced much as he discoursed with his generals that night on the facility with which the prophecy of Said Abulola might be fulfilled. He decided on the various dispositions to be made with his captains, and directed all the arrangements for the coming day. When the dawn appeared, he made his Azala, or early prayer, reviewed the warriors arrayed under the various banners of his host, and commanded that the trumpets and Anafires should give the signal for battle.

The strife commenced accordingly, with equal resolution on the part of both armies, and fearful cries of war on either side. The air was filled with a whirlwind of arrows, and thick clouds of dust arose to the skies. The leaders of the van made a show of retreating, as had been agreed on, and appeared to be yielding ground, in spite of themselves, to the might of the enemy. Then the Christians, animated by that semblance of advantage, came down from their acclivities as do impetuous torrents that descend to the plains, and their fearful vociferations caused the valleys to resound. But when the advance of the Moslemah seemed to have been thrown into disorder, and the centre appeared on the point of giving way to its terrors in all the confusion of flight, the cavalry of the rear-guard, and that of the wings of the Moslemah army, took the Christians in flank and attacked them on both sides.

The generals and cavaliers of the Infidel host fought with astonishing valour; but the courage of the multitude sinking before that unexpected onslaught, the great mass of their forces became dismayed, and, falling into disorder, the troops began to fly on all sides, pursued by the Moslemah cavalry, which made a cruel carnage among them. The number of captives taken was also very great, but was more remarkable for the quality and importance of the persons composing a large portion of those captured, than for the vast amount of the common people.

And now was seen a strange thing; for, as if Said Abulola had by his science attained to the knowledge of what the Great and Mighty God had determined in the eternal decrees of His providence, that which he had described in

his poetical augury came to pass, and his prophecy was accomplished.

Among the principal cavaliers taken captive was the King of the Christians, Garcia Ben Sancho, but he was so grievously wounded that he died a few days after the battle, notwithstanding all the cures and medicaments of the Leeches who were charged by Muhamad Almanzor to do everything which their science permitted for his cure. This memorable engagement took place on the second day of Rebie Postrera in the year 385.*

The Hagib commanded that the body of King Garcia should be placed in a richly decorated coffin, which he then wrapped in a covering of cloth of scarlet and gold, very precious. This, filled with fine aromas, he was about to send to the Christian subjects of the dead monarch, when certain cavaliers of his people arrived in the camp with great riches to ransom the body of their king; but of all those costly presents Almanzor would receive nothing.

In the moon Xawal of the same year 385, the Hagib Muhamad defeated the Christians once more; and after that engagement, the King Bermond of Gallicia† sent messengers and letters bearing proposals of peace to Almanzor, who commanded Ayub Ben Amer of Gezira Saltis to return with the Christian envoys for the purpose of treating with their king, Bermond, on the part of the Moslemah.

The rains having then commenced, prevented the Hagib from continuing his enterprise, and he returned to Cordova, where he was received with great rejoicings.

When Ayûb Ben Amer arrived in the capital with the conditions of peace to which he had agreed with King Bermond of Gallicia, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was much displeased to find that he had suffered the infidels to gain great advantages, and, conceiving certain suspicions against Ayûb, he cast him into prison: nor could the Hagib ever be prevailed on to grant him his liberty while he lived; and it was not until after the death of Muhamad Almanzor that Ben Amer was released from his imprisonment by Abdelmelic his son.

* A.D. 995.

† Bermudo II. of Leon.—*Condé.*

CHAP. CI.—Of various events that now took place in Spain and Africa.

The friendship and good intelligence apparently existing between Zeir Ben Atia and the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor was maintained by the former in public, until the time when, inflated by his great increase of power, he began to make manifest the hatred which he had long concealed in his heart. He built and fortified the city of Wahda, surrounding it with walls, and furnishing its gates with towers; he also built a castle in the manner of a fortress. This city he peopled with inhabitants chosen from such of his people as he believed to be most devoted to his interests; and, having constituted the place a regal abode and the capital of his states, the site of it being nearly in the centre of the same, he placed in it all his riches and treasures.

In the moon Regeb of the year 384, Zeir Ben Atia completed the walls of his city; and although he had some differences with the Hagib Almanzor even while occupied with that work, yet he dissembled the anger he felt until the year 386, when Almanzor was informed that he had commanded his name to be omitted from the public prayer, and would scarcely suffer the mention of that of Hixem El Muyad Billah. It was furthermore made known to the Hagib that Zeir Ben Atia, showing no respect to the king, had despoiled of their governments not a few among those who had been appointed by Muhamad Almanzor, and had sent them to Cebta. Hearing these things, the Hagib then commanded the general Wadha El Feti to march against Ben Atia, and that leader set forth accordingly, with a very large force of foot and horse.

In the moon Safar of the year 387, the Hagib Almanzor made an irruption on the territory of Alava, and on that occasion he divided all the booty and captives taken among his troops, not excepting even the fifth that appertained to the king; Hixem El Muyad having authorised him to do so at his departure for that expedition, in consideration of the fact that it was undertaken during the season of cold and rains.

The forces of Wahda El Feti had meanwhile arrived at Tangiers, where they were joined by some of the Cabilas

from Gomara and Sanhaga, with others belonging to the Xenetes and certain tribes of Barbary. To all these Wadha distributed money, as well as arms and vestments, departing from Tangiers with a very numerous host. Zeir Ben Atia came forth to meet him from Medina Fez, having on his part a carefully selected force; and the first engagement, a very obstinate one, was followed by others, which were also cruel combats. The two generals fought during three months with various fortune, until the host of Wadha El Feti, receiving no reinforcements, became exhausted, and, thus weakened, began to yield to the force of numbers; finally, the troops were compelled to take flight, and sought refuge in Tangiers, after having suffered very heavy loss.

Then Wadha El Feti formed his resolution, and wrote to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor making known the condition of his affairs, and entreating that he might be at once supplied with succours of men, money, and provisions, all of which had failed him; whereupon the Hagib himself set forth from Cordova, and repaired to Algezira Alhadra. There he commanded the assembling of a large force, and sent his own son, Abdelmelic Almudafar, therewith. The flower of the Spanish cavalry was called out for that expedition, which was joined by the principal Alcaides; but Almanzor remained at Agezira, to be prepared for what might follow, and to give all the more effectual impulse to the forwarding of the succours demanded by Wadha El Feti.

When the news that Abdelmelic Almudafar had passed the sea reached Zeir Ben Atia, he became much alarmed, and wrote to all the Zenete Cabilas, requesting aid; when there came to him people from Velad Zaub, from Teleneen, Sigilmesa, Melia, and other places of the Wadi Zeneta,—emboldened by the arrival of whom, he sallied forth to seek and combat his enemies.

On his part, Abdelmelic Almudafar left Tangiers with the troops of Andalusia, and accompanied by the General Wadha El Feti. The two hosts met at Wadi-Mena, on the confines of Tangiers, when a battle ensued of such atrocious carnage, that the like had never before been heard of. Commencing at dawn, the combatants continued the struggle throughout the whole day, and did not cease until the set of sun.

In the hottest moment of the conflict a negro youth, called Zalem, whose brother had been killed by Zeiri Ben Atia, met the latter in the combat, and seeing a good opportunity for avenging the death of his kinsman, the youth, who knew Zeiri by his insignia, came behind him and gave him three severe wounds with his Hanger or cutlass. Believing these wounds to be mortal, the negro then hastened to Abdelmelic, assuring him that he had wounded Zeiri Ben Atia to the death; whereupon that general, animating his troops with the intelligence thus received, fell with renewed vigour upon his enemies, who, being deprived of their leader, and believing him dead, were thrown into confusion and put to flight, the Andalusians pursuing them eagerly and making a fearful slaughter.

The disorder and dismay of the Zeneta forces soon attained to the royal pavilion, into which Zeiri had retired to have his wounds bound up, and the vanquished leader saw himself compelled to join the flight with some of his principal cavaliers, leaving his camp in the hands of the enemy, who seized the tents, pavilions, arms, horses, and camels, with a large provision for the wants of the army, and great flocks of cattle.

Zeiri fled, wounded as he was, until he had reached a place called the Angosturas of Wadilhaya, situated midway between two cities of Mequinez. Here he made a halt, and remained until he was joined by the nobles of his people and a large part of his fugitive army, hoping to be permitted to rest there until he should be sufficiently restored to proceed once more against Abdelmelic Almudafar. But the son of Muhamad Almanzor was not so to be thrown off; knowing whither Zeiri had fled, his opponent despatched Wadha El Feti with a picked troop of five hundred horse, and this body, falling upon the forces of Ben Atia when they were least expecting an attack, compelled them to recommence the struggle. The battle was, as before, a well-contested one; but, although it was now night, the Andalusians fought so bravely that they once again defeated the foe, and this they did with all the more assurance, as being confident in the near vicinity of their camp and the succours held in reserve for them by Abdelmelic.

The second defeat of Zeiri Ben Atia took place in the

middle of the moon of the Blessed Ramazan, in the year 387. The carnage was very great, the larger part of Zeiri's troops remaining dead on the field, and the nobles of Magarava, who were but little short of one thousand men, being all taken prisoners.

Being informed of this last capture, Abdelmelic Almudafar commanded that all should be instantly set at liberty, and even gave them their horses and arms, that each might depart whithersoever it pleased him; but a great number of them determined to remain with him, and took service in his host.

Zeiri Ben Atia was meanwhile flying, accompanied by only a few of his people, to Medina Fez; but when he arrived at the gates of that city he found that the inhabitants had closed them against him, and refused to give him admission. The unfortunate prince then entreated that his children, and the rest of his family and household, might be sent out to him; whereupon the citizens put them forth, giving them horses and provisions for the necessities of a journey, when they all fled to the desert before Abdelmelic Almudafar, the son of Almanzor. That general was meanwhile devastating the territory of Sanhaga in his progress, and soon arrived at Medina Fez, where he was received with acclamations of triumph. His entry into the city was made on a Saturday, towards the end of the moon Xawal, in the year 387.

Abdelmelic now wrote to his father Almanzor, giving him an account of his enterprise and the victories he had obtained, when the letter was read in the Alminbar of the Great Aljama of Cordova, and in that of the Aljama of Azahra, as well as in all the principal cities of Spain, east and west, as it had now become the custom to do on the occasion of every great victory. That day the Hagib Muhamad commanded that liberty should be given to five hundred male captives of the Christians, and three hundred female slaves of that infidel race, thereby offering thanks to God for his signal mercies. He also distributed large sums to the poor, and paid the debts of many among the most honourable of the needy.

In that same year of 387 the bridge of Toledo was rebuilt, by order of Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer Al-

manzor, Hagib to the Prince of the Believers, Hixem Ben Alhakem, called El Muyad Billah, the work having been performed by the hands of his servant and vizier, Chalaf Ben Muhamad Alameri. In the same year there died at that city, even Toledo, Abdelmenaum Ben Galbon, the Mocri, or Reader of the Aljama, and Ahmed Ben Sohli the Alfaqui, both natives of that place. In Medina Azahra, likewise, there departed from this life the Muti of the Aljama, Ibrahim Ben Abderahman El Tenesi, a learned and virtuous man.

Now in those days it came to pass that there was a poor widow, the mother of a robber and assassin, who was so notorious a criminal that his heavy offences had been noised about through all Andalusia; but the woman now presented herself, nevertheless, to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor with a supplication, entreating that her son might be pardoned, and adjuring the Hagib, by the great favour at that time shown to all poor widows and orphans, to take pity upon him.

When Almanzor had read that petition he struck his forehead with the open hand, and said "Gualà!* "thou hast reminded me in good time of this evil-doer; the man must die." But instead of writing on the order, which he then gave to that effect, "Let him be crucified," the Hagib, in the distraction of the moment, and with his thoughts occupied by the mother's prayer, wrote as follows—"Let him be set free; in which form the command was taken to the vizier, whose business it was to write upon it the formula, "Be this done as commanded;" after which it was to be presented to the Sahib Xarta, Prefect of Police, when the last-named functionary saw that the sentence, confirmed by the Criminal Judge of the city, was carried into execution.

But the vizier, being well acquainted with the character of the man's crimes, and unable to believe that he was to be pardoned, sent a messenger to the Hagib Muhamad, inquiring if he had given the order in that sense; whereupon Almanzor took the paper hastily and struck out the words

* Guala! An exclamation of great emphasis, implying much emotion. It may be rendered in more than one manner, as: "Now by Heaven!" or "By Allah!" which is the rendering usually adopted by the present writer.—Tr.

"Let him be set free:" but instead of replacing them by the order for death, he wrote them again by the same inadvertence, insomuch that the paper remained as before.

Surprised to find that although the Hagib had struck out those words, "Let him be set free," he had yet written them again, the vizier once more sent his messenger to Almanzor, demanding to know if he chose to have the matter concluded so, and not otherwise. The Hagib became much displeased at this second interruption, but again struck out the erroneous order.

Yet what happened? Beneath the words thus erased were written the same words, now thrice repeated; and this time the Vizier, no longer able to divine what was meant by these repeated erasures, each followed by the re-establishment of the same phrase,—this time, I say, the Vizier repaired in person to the presence of the Hagib, and laying the paper before him, he said, "Thrice hast thou now commanded the setting free of this great criminal, and that of a truth is a strange thing."

Almanzor then looked attentively at the words which he had thus three times written, and after having regarded them for some time in silence, he raised his eyes from the order before him, and spake thus: "It is so. I have written it thrice, and let him be set free; for although it was not my intention to do this, yet him whom God hath willed to be spared and given to freedom, we may not dare to crucify;" and the man was set at liberty accordingly.

To his son, Abdelmelic Almudafar, the Hagib Almanzor now wrote, giving him very wise counsels as to the manner in which he was to govern the people whom he had subjected to his rule in Africa, recommending justice and prudence in terms of great force. This letter was read in the Minbar of the Great Aljama of the Alcairvanes on the last Juma of the moon of Dylcada, and to that same paper was appended the order by which Abdelmelic Almudafar was appointed Amil of Almagreb.

In the spring of the year 388, the Hagib Muhamad sent orders for the passing over into Spain of the General Wadha El Feti with a large body of cavalry; in command

of which Almanzor proposed to send that general against the Christians; and Abdelmelic Almudafar despatched him into Andalusia accordingly without any delay.

About the same time, the fortifications of Gebal Almina, a lofty hill to the east of Medina Cebta, were constructed, also by order of Muhamad Almanzor, who had remarked the level space upon its summit when he passed through that city, and saw that the plain there presented was well calculated for the establishment of such defences. It was, indeed, his purpose to transport the city itself to the summit of the hill; but after his death, they could never succeed in removing the dwellers from their seats below; and as the people thus persisted in retaining their ancient abode, the town commenced on the heights of Almina fell to ruin.

Abdelmelic meanwhile continued in Medina Fez, governing the city and state with justice and prudence, and giving cause of complaint to no man; yet, at the end of six months, his father wrote commanding him to return to Spain, sending Iza Ben Said, Sahib Xarta of Cordova, to assume the government in his place. That ruler retained his office accordingly until the moon Safar, in the year 389, when Almanzor deprived him also of his government, confiscating all his possessions, and sending the General Wadha El Feti to govern in his stead. Iza Ben Said returned to Spain in the same year.

About this time Galib Ben Omeya Ben Galib of Moron, called Abulasi, an erudite and much renowned poet, was pacing along the shore of the Guadalquiver where that river flows by Cordova, and being in sight of the Alcazar or royal palace, his meditations resolved themselves into the following verses:—

"Palace of royal state, proud Alcazar:
What rich delights within thy walls are found:
May thy good star preserve thee from all harm!

How many powerful monarchs have thy roofs
Seen pass beneath their splendours. Yet the stars
Now calmly look upon the silent graves
Of kings and heroes who have there abode.

Tell to the world, then,—whose admiring eyes
Look on thy seeming steadfastness—that all
Is but deceit. Say, that of earth's delights
Not one hath permanence; and bid all know
That Time holds ever on his measured course.

Yea, that we long for, as the morning sun
Brightens the scene, we shun at close of day
With trembling or disdain. Doth not all change?
Where now are thy proud lords, imperial Syria?
Where their high dwellings—columns, arches, towers;
The shining gold and azure of their halls,
Their strength and splendour?—each alike hath flown,
And scarcely now remains a trace of all
More than of some poor nest of ants, low-niched
At foot of lofty mountain. Better far
Are ye who, sheltered in your lowly vales,
Live in remote tranquillity. Seek not
The height sublime, whose giddy summit bends
Sheer o'er the precipice. Let not thy foot
Press those illusive paths that beckon upwards:
Rest thou below. For if o'er the deep valleys
The clouds gloom darkly at the break of morn,
Yet these before might of day shall flee,
Leaving the plains to calm security.

Zeiri Ben Atia had, meanwhile, arrived in the territory of Sanhaga, which he found in a state of revolt against its sovereign, Badis Ben Mansur Ben Balkin, who had been at variance with the nobles of his people from the time of his father's death. Availing himself of that occasion, Zeiri Ben Atia then sent to request assistance from the Zenete Cabilas, when a large body of cavalry instantly joined him from Magarava and other places. He then fell on the Comarcas of Sanhaga, which he subjugated, driving the troops of his opponent from the district, and proceeding to Medina Tahart, of which he took possession, as he did of other towns in the territory of Zaub. He also made himself master successively of Telencen, Xelf, and Masila; but in each of these places he took care to have the name of the King Hixem El Muyad Billah proclaimed in the streets.

Having laid siege to Medina Axiada, which was the chief of all the towns in Sanhaga, Zeiri there maintained a battle with his enemies from the dawn of morning until late in the

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afternoon, when the violent exertions he made re-opened the wounds received from the Negro Zalem,—and of these he died. This event took place in the year 391.

CHAP. CII.—Of the battle of Calat Anosor, and the death of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor.

In the year 390, Muhamad Almanzor marched once more on the frontier of eastern Spain, and the Christians came forth against him with a powerful host; but he attacked them without delay, and the Christian generals, who now feared him as one who held the Sword of Destiny, were again defeated and humbled by his hand. Heavy was the doom they suffered, and unhappy were the memories that he left among them of that battle of Hisn Dhervera. He devastated their lands, destroyed their fortresses, and burnt their towns;—the country which had once been a thickly peopled one was made a desert; seeing that the Infidels themselves burnt their own villages, hamlets, and dwellings of all kinds, to the end that our people might not profit by the shelter they afforded.

All these things accomplished, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor returned to Cordova in triumph; and it was then that Ahmed Ben Bordi, called Abu Hafas, one of the most learned viziers of the capital, presented him with his poetical works, while Suleiman Ben Golghal also laid before the Hagib his book, wherein he treats of such of the physicians of Spain as had been most extensively renowned for their learning in the medical sciences.

At that time it chanced that the Vizier Hassan Ben Melic Ben Abi Obda, an elegant and accomplished poet, entered the chamber of Muhamad Almanzor to pay him a visit, when he found the Hagib holding in his hands the Proverbs of Sohal Ben Abi Galib, known as Abu Serri, a work which had been compiled and written for the Caliph Harun Raxid,—and Almanzor said to him, "I am much pleased with the elegance of this book, and enjoy its merits; but the work still requires one thing to render it complete:

it wants a good commentary." Hearing this, the vizier Hassan requested the Hagib to give him the book, and, having received the same, retired with it to his house. A week only had elapsed from that time, when he again appeared in the palace of Almanzor, to whom he now presented a learned commentary on the work of Sohal, in three hundred verses, of which he had made a beautiful copy, and this he now laid before the Hagib. Of this composition Muhamad Almanzor was accustomed to say, that the commentary of Hassan Ben Melic was the most elegant work ever written in Spain,—and the same thing was affirmed by Husein Ben Walid Abulcasim in the academies of Almanzor, where Hassan, the author of the commentary, was at that time competing in poetical improvisation with Abulola Said Ben Alhassan, and with Gehuar El Tegibi, known as Aben Floriso of Almeria.

In the year 391, there departed for the East, Abderahman Ben Cid Amon of Ucles, a disciple of Abu Othman Ben Said Ben Salem El Mageriti, so called from his native place Magerit, in the territory of Toledo; a man widely renowned in Africa, Egypt, and the Iracas, not only for his great knowledge, but for his exemplary life. Now El Tagiebi of Cordova was once sojourning with Abu Othman at Medina Bagdad, and one day, the former going forth from the city, arrived at certain rustic abodes at no great distance, where he found a Saqui, or water-carrier, who held in his hand a beautifully cut and graven glass of crystal, formed with extraordinary grace, and filled with the purest and clearest water. It was then the season of roses, which had, however, but just begun, and El Taglebi, gathering some very fresh ones, placed them in that crystalline water, which looked all empurpled with the glow of the flowers as they shone through the transparency of the glass.

"Now as I was examining all this attentively," relates El Taglebi, "the water-carrier said to me, 'What art thou looking at, Mogrebi? dost thou stand thus admiring the beauty of the roses?' To which I made answer and said, "Yea, that do I: seen thus in that crystal vase, the beauty of the roses enchants me.' 'Hear, then,' rejoined the water-carrier, 'a thought of mine concerning this flower and vase.' Whereupon he repeated the lines that follow —

'The rose! the rose! she holds the throne of flowers;
Her empire none declines:
To her the blossoms bend in all their bowers,—
Their lovely queen, the rose, supreme she shines.' "

And now, that the Christians might not have repose for a single year, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor commanded the assemblage of a large army: cavalry from the African provinces made an important part of this force; and the first division of those troops disembarked at Algezira Alhadra, while the second was landed at Santa Maria, in Ocsonoba. The governor of Santarem, in Algarva, Farhon Ben Abdallah Ben Abdelwalid, also assembled a large body of cavalry, as did the Walies of Merida and Badajos, who summoned all the banners of their territories, respectively, to take part in the conflict about to be renewed. The banners of Toledo were in like manner assembled; and in the year 392, the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor commenced his march upon the Comarcas of the Christian territories with a great and powerful host.

The report of these preparations caused a similar movement among the Infidels, and they gathered all their force to go forth against Almanzor. The Moslemah were arranged in two great divisions: the first comprising the cavalry of Andalusia, and the second that of Africa. The stream of war then poured itself over the country on each bank of the Douro, without meeting resistance at any part, and the march of the invading forces was continued along that river, even to its sources.

The Christians had meanwhile established their camp in the Comarca of Calat Anosor, and had divided their host into three great bodies, which covered the face of the country with their multitudes, as do the widely extended clouds of the locust, when they come darkening all the plains.

When the advanced guard of the Moslemah discovered the camp of the Infidels, and reported the vast extent over which the broad wings thereof were spread, the hearts of the Faithful were troubled, and they represented the same to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who thereupon made a recognizance in person, and, having examined the position of the enemy, then arranged his troops for the battle.

There were some few skirmishes between the outposts that same day, but the approach of evening prevented the combatants from coming to a general engagement.

Yet in the short truce permitted to them by the shadows of night, the Moslemah generals did not venture to give themselves to repose. Anxious and doubtful, they passed the hours of darkness between fear and hope, looking up to the stars and turning their eyes ever and anon to that part of the heavens where day must soon appear. But the coming of those roseate tints which precede her arrival—the brightness of the dawn which is wont to gladden the hearts of men,—then served rather to darken the spirits of the fearful, while the clangour of the trumpets and sound of martial instruments, usually so inspiriting, filled even the most courageous and experienced with dread. The Hagib Muhamad Almanzor made his prayer of the dawn; the generals took up their respective positions and assembled their banners. The Christians also put themselves in movement, their divisions coming forth in excellent order, and the earth trembling beneath their feet.

Then the Ataquebiras* and clamours of all kinds arising from both camps, the roars of the trumpets and the thunders of the drums, with the neighings of a thousand horses, a thousand times repeated, were sent back in echoes from the neighbouring hills, until it seemed that the earth and heavens were coming together. The battle commenced with equal animosity, as with equal bravery, on both sides, and was maintained with admirable constancy by either host. The Christian cavaliers, with their horses sheathed in mail, fought like famished wolves, and their generals appeared everywhere in the hottest fury of the struggle, directing and animating their people. Muhamad Almanzor in like manner spurred his fiery charger in turn towards every part of his force; he resembled a raging panther leaping on the prey, and thirsting for blood. With his Andalusian cavalry he dashed amidst the iron-clad warriors, and plunging into the thickest of the ardent fight, enraged at

* The Ataquebiras are those praises to God with which the Moslemah enter the battle, crying "Alloh, Hu Acbar"—God is the greatest, the most powerful.—*Condé.*

the unusual tenacity of the resistance, and the barbarous valour of those infidel hordes. His generals also performed miracles of bravery; the African cavaliers more than once broke the ranks of those serried squadrons, which the Christians, on their part, hastened to close and make good, giving them to appear the moment after that encounter as though naught had assailed them. The dust arising from that enormous extent of battle-field obscured the sun before his hour, and with its thick darkness anticipated the dusky wings of night; thus separating the contending hosts without either being able to say that the other had yielded a foot of that ensanguined space, although the earth had become hidden beneath the multitude of the corpses, and reeked with the blood of men.

That night, as Muhamad Almanzor sat waiting in his pavilion, for the accustomed assembling of his generals, and looked that they should come around him, as was their wont, he perceived that they delayed to appear; and enquiring the cause, he discovered that nearly all who had not already fallen on the field of battle were severely wounded. Then alone did he comprehend the extent of injury that his host had suffered, whereupon he gave orders that the camp should be broken up, and before the dawn Almanzor was on his way to the passage of the Douro, which he effected by the bridges of Andalusia: but his retreat was made with the diminished force arranged in order of battle, lest the Christians should follow to renew the fight.

On their part, those Infidels, remarking the movement in the Moslemah camp, and believing their enemy to be about to renew the sanguinary contest, arranged themselves also in order of battle; but becoming aware of the retirement of Almanzor, they made no effort to intercept his march, wearied as they were with the labours of the previous day, and their force as well as that of the Hagib being much weakened by the heavy losses they had sustained.

Almanzor was in the meanwhile pursuing his retreating path, but with a spirit so dejected and oppressed, that he neglected to give attention to wounds of considerable gravity which he had himself received in the battle: the agitation of mind and sadness of heart which he suffered, rendered those injuries more serious; he became unable to

retain his seat on horseback, and felt that his life was approaching its close. His people then placed him in a litter, and thus borne on the shoulders of the soldiery, he proceeded some fourteen leagues further, which brought him to Walcorari, on the frontiers of Castile and in the vicinity of Medina Zelim. Here he was met by his son Abdelmelic, who had been despatched by the king Hixem El Muyad Billah to enquire of his welfare. In this place Almanzor died, and that event occurred on Monday the twenty-fifth* of the moon Ramazan in the year of the Hegira 392,† he being at that time in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

When the rumour of his death began to be heard among the troops, there rose the voice of bitter wailing, and they said, "We have lost our leader, our defender, our father;" and they spoke the truth: long did the soldiers mourn him with a heavy sorrow. The command of the host was assumed by Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of the Hagib Muhamad; and the troops bore the body of their general to Medina Zelim, where they interred the remains in the vestments which Almanzor had worn in the battle, seeing that he died in the service of God: they covered him, moreover, with the aromatic dust collected in more than fifty victorious contests against the Infidels. His bier was accompanied by the whole army; the prayer for him being said by his son Abdelmelic. May God have mercy upon him!

Very remarkable is the sepulchre of Almanzor at Medina Zelim, and upon it are engraved the following verses:—

> "He lives no more: but his high deeds have left
> So proud a memory in this lower world,
> That, hearing their relation, thou mayst know him
> As stood he living there before thine eyes.

* Edobi, Alabar, and Hayan Homaidi, all agree in assigning the 25th of Ramazan, 392, as the date of Almanzor's death; but Abulfeda, in his Annals, affirms that 393 was the year, and the Archbishop Rodrigo gives the same date. The epitaph of the Hagib is repeated by numerous authors, and among them by Abu Zeib Ben Xarif, who cites it in his work on the metric art. The Annalist of Fez adds that he was covered with the dust of his battles before mentioned. Husein Ben Asim wrote the life of Muhamad Almanzor under the title of "Alamerian Exploits." The Spanish version of the epitaph given in the text was made by my friend Don Leandro Fernandez de Moratin.—*Condé.*

† A.D. 1002.

Such as he was we shall not see again
Through all the coming ages. Never more
Shall rise so great a leader. Ever conquering,
Of Ismail's people he increased the empire,
That well he knew to guard. Alas, our father,
Our shelter, and our shield!"

The Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, called Almanzor, ruled the state with much glory and honour during five and twenty years: he was entrusted by Sobiha, mother of King Hixem, with all negociations, whether of peace or war, and nothing was done in the kingdom without his consent, insomuch that he wanted only the name of king: but, of a truth, to his prudence, bravery, and good fortune, the country owed great prosperity and numerous conquests. He was always the victor of its enemies, and never saw the infidel host that he did not defeat it; neither was city or fortress ever besieged by him without being compelled to surrender. The frontier of the Moslemah was extended by his prowess to the uttermost limits of Spain, and made to stretch from sea to sea. During all the time of his government the internal peace of the state never suffered interruption, because the fear in which all men stood of the Hagib prevented any from daring to raise the slightest spark of sedition, or venture a single act of disobedience: thus the insurrections by which all Spain had previously been but too often set in flames, was unknown in the time of Almanzor, wherefore the state was in his day great and flourishing: it had; indeed, attained, beneath the rule of his hand, to a degree of power and importance not hoped for in earlier times. The victorious battles which Almanzor fought against the Christians amounted to more than fifty, insomuch that their intimidated kings had more than once sent to intreat for peace, but could not obtain it at his hand.

Muhamad Almanzor was born in the year 327, which was that of the great battle of Alhandac near Zamora; and his death took place at the end of Ramazan in the year 392. The Lord selected the arm of Almanzor to avenge Islam.

When the fatal intelligence of the Hagib's death reached Cordova it caused the utmost grief, and the day was one of universal mourning not in that city only but throughout

the kingdom; and it was long before the people could console themselves for that heavy loss.

The populace of Cordova had at this time certain verses, written by Ibrahim Ben Edris El Hasani, very frequently in their mouths. These lines prognosticated evil to the State from the predominance of Almanzor and his partizans, whom he called the Alameries; and for having written the same, that noble African poet had received sentence of banishment from Cordova some short time after the death of Alhassan Ben Kenuz. The verses are these:—

"All Heaven and the glad Earth rejoicing lay
Bathed in your crescent Moon's refulgent light,
Ye sons of great Omeya. But the Full
Hath come, and the Decresence must ensue.

Yea, much I fear me that the deep eclipse
Now paling her fair beams, shall pass no more
Till comes the utter darkness. Your clear star
Once shining high, hath sunk, and Fortune's smile
Hath left your house, ye sons of great Omeya."

CHAP. CIII.—Of the government of Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of the hagib Muhamad Almanzor.

The Sultana Sobiha, mother of Hixem El Muyad Billah, was removed from life about this time; but before her departure she had counselled her son to place the government in the hands of Abdelmelic, son of Almanzor, in whom she trusted that there would be found the qualities of prudence, bravery, and virtue, which had distinguished his father. And as the Sultana-mother had advised him to do, Hixem Ben Alhakem did, all applauding that judicious decision, since it was known that Abdelmelic Almudafar had inherited the valour and prudence of Muhamad Almanzor, although he had not the same invariable good fortune. And in that respect his life contradicted the predictions of the astrologers, who had prophesied at his birth that the greatness of Spain would arrive at its highest degree of glory in his days; yet it is true that for some time the state did enjoy considerable prosperity under his government. King Hixem

meanwhile continued in his wonted retirement, given up to the pleasures by which he was surrounded and in which he had passed his life.

In Africa, the Ameer Alman Ben Zeiri had held command since the death of his father, Zeiri Ben Atia; the Zenete Cabilas having proffered him their allegiance. Being made acquainted with the departure of Muhamad Almanzor from the life of this world, Alman Ben Zeiri wrote to Abdelmelic, requesting him to confirm his nomination as Ameer of Magreb, to which the son of Almanzor consented without delay, sending him at the same time a magnificent vestment, a sword, and a fine horse richly caparisoned. Nor did Alman Ben Zeiri fail to maintain his obedience faithfully to the Hagib Abdelmelic and to King Hixem Ben Alhakem, whom he caused to be proclaimed in all his states: wherefore, to increase his power, Abdelmelic recalled the general Wadha El Feti from his office as Wali of Fez, commanding that general to return to Cordova, and placing the government of Fez and its dependencies in the hands of Alman Ben Zeiri.

Being thus favoured, Alman offered to send a yearly present to Cordova, consisting of a certain number of horses selected from those of the most noble race, with suitable caparisons; and that proposal being accepted, with the first of those presents he dispatched his son Manser as a hostage for his loyalty and obedience. This happened in the year 393, and the young Manser soon became much beloved among the greater nobles of Cordova, where he remained until the commencement of those tribulations and civil discords which eventually ensued, and wherein the state and dignity of the Alamerics* came to an end, as we shall presently see. God alone is eternal, and His sovereignty alone endureth for ever.

Now the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar had proposed to himself to walk in the footsteps of his father as regarded the Infidel, making two irruptions in each year on the territories of the Christian kings; and in this year of 393 he did very happily avenge the blood of the Moslemah which had flowed on the day that beheld the Hagib Almanzor receive his death wound. In his first campaign Abdelmelic

* The partizans of the house of Muhamad Almanzor were so called.

repaired to the eastern frontier of Spain, and arrived at Lerida, where he gave battle to the Christians, and defeating them with great slaughter, drove them back to their mountains: the strife was a very obstinate one, and in the midst of it there died that Ayub Ben Amer of Saltis, who, having become an object of suspicion to the Hagib Almanzor on account of the peace made with the king of Gallicia, had been imprisoned by him in the year 385, as before related: but having been released by Abdelmelic, he had accompanied that ruler in the campaign now in question, and had died fighting with much valour. His remains were then buried in the mosque of Lerida.

The Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar then returned to Cordova, where he was received with many demonstrations of gladness; the people having conceived much hope from the success of his first campaign as Hagib, and all promising themselves a succession of triumphs and victories over the Infidel.

Now the Cadi of Cordova, Aben Dhakuen, had recommended the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar to confer the charge of the Cadiate of Toledo on Chalaf Ben Meruan, El Sahari, who was much renowned for his wisdom and virtues, which Abdelmelic did accordingly; but the Sahari accepted that office with reluctance, and shortly afterwards requested his dismissal from its cares, desiring to devote himself to religious meditations, and the practices of asceticism, with undisturbed tranquillity. Chalaf Ben Meruan had studied in Cordova, and in the year 372 had repaired to the East for the further prosecution of his studies.

At this time that erudite and renowned poet of Eastern Spain, Suleiman Ben Mohran, of Saragossa, arrived in Cordova, and instantly joined the Academies, or assemblies of active spirits, who met in the house of the Vizier Abulasbag Iza Ben Said, who was a member of the Mexuar, or Council of the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, where many learned men were in the habit of assembling after the death of Muhamad Almanzor. But among these there was one who would never appear in any of the meetings, or take part in the customary competitions, after that ruler had departed from life. This was Said Ben El Hassan, El Rebai, called Abu-

lola, who, though constantly urged to join them by the Sons of the Hagib, could never be prevailed on to do so.

"A friend of mine," saith Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, "did nevertheless hear this Abulola reciting certain verses which he had made to the praise of Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Muhamad Almanzor, in the year 396; but a short time after that the poet determined to leave Spain, and passed over into Sicily, where he spent the remainder of his life, and eventually died, departing to the mercy of Allah in the year 417."

Towards the close of the year 393, Chalaf Ben Mesaud El Jurawi of Melila, called El Malki, and known as Aben Amina, came to Cordova for the purpose of continuing his studies in that city, where his erudition and other excellent qualities caused him to be much esteemed by the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, as well as by the Cadi, Abu Dhaknên. In that year there died at Seville the most accomplished scholar of Spain: this was Abu Omar Ahmed Ben Abdallah, known as El Begi, whose acquirements in the different branches of art and science surpassed those of every other man in that country. There was no man of reputation for learning whom the father of Abu Omar had not sought and appropriated to the benefit of his son: the young man studied with all the most learned doctors, whether of the East or West, travelling for that purpose in Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Khorassan; insomuch that at the age of eighteen the extent of his knowledge was a marvel. He lived the greater part of his days in Seville, where he was born; and even in his earliest youth the Cadi of that city, Aben Faweris, very frequently consulted him in affairs of the highest importance.

At Cordova, in the same year, there died the celebrated general Jali Ben Ahmed Ben Jali, one of the most able leaders of the Alameries. In the last hours of his life he expressed deep regret for the sickness, which, reducing him to the necessity of dying in his bed, had not permitted him to depart from life on the field of battle, as becomes a good cavalier.

In the year 394, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar assembled a large force of cavalry, with equal strength of foot-soldiers, and marched towards the frontiers of Gallicia, which

he crossed, carrying into that country the devastation of the tempest. He met the Christian host in a pitched battle near Leon, and having defeated his enemies he took possession of the city. After this the Hagib continued his incursions on the Comarcas with tolerable success, and having constantly retained a certain amount of advantage over the Infidels, he returned to Cordova with much spoil and many captives. During four consecutive years did the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar thus march on the territories of the Christians, bearing ruin and devastation along the whole line of the frontier, east and west, nor did he once fail to destroy in the summer whatever those Infidels had been able to make good during the winter. In this year of 394 there appeared in the heavens a comet, or blazing star, of great magnitude and astonishing splendour.

In the year 396 there was witnessed a second phenomenon of similar kind; a bright star, namely, which was seen in the heavens, and was one of those which are accompanied by great thunders while they run their course: this being one of the twelve notable ones mentioned by the most ancient observers. The learned watched the course of that star with much attention, and many were of opinion that none of this species ever appears unless when God the Highest, in His special providence, hath determined to bring about great changes in the world.

In this same year the ships of the Moslemah sailed to the coasts of Italy, and making a descent upon Salerno they put that city to contribution. But while the invaders were carelessly awaiting the treasure thus exacted, the inhabitants made a sudden onslaught, whereby their assailants were thrown into great confusion; and although they did ultimately succeed in regaining their ships, that was not done before they had suffered an irreparable loss, the bravest of their number having perished in the conflict.

The Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, repairing to the city of Toledo in the year 397, there visited the Xeque Muhamad Ben Ibrahim El Coxeri, of Cordova, a man of great wisdom, and extensively known for his prudence in council, the austerity of his life, and his contempt for all the vanities of the world. It chanced that Abdelmelic one day proceeding to visit this sage on a certain Juma after the hour of

public prayer, found the doctor surrounded by his disciples, to whom he was expounding a question of science. Having requested permission to enter, Abdelmelic received the Xeque's reply desiring him to do so; but although Muhamad Ibrahim perceived that it was the Hagib who approached, he bade his disciples not rise to receive him, but keep their places, which they all did as commanded. Abdelmelic entered the apartment, where he was received by the Xeque with much courtesy, which he returned by doing great honour to the school of the sage. After remaining a certain time, the son of Almanzor took his leave, entreating that Muhamad Ben Ibrahim would recommend him to God in his Adoas, or supplications: whereupon the Xeque instantly made his prayer and said, "Allahoma!* O Lord Allah! In the hearts of the subjects of this thy servant do thou place the perfection of obedience, and in his heart let there be love and good will for them all." With that blessing the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar departed.

Having remained at Toledo for some time awaiting the assembling of the banners of that province, Abdelmelic then pursued his march, and falling on the territories of the Christians he inflicted great damage on those unbelievers.

At that time there came to Cordova not a few of the most important men among the Christians, who had left their home in consequence of certain disquietudes there prevailing, and these persons now requested permission from the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar to establish their abode in the capital, or within a short distance of its gates. Abdelmelic then made known that request to King Hixem, who rejoiced much in their demand, and accorded them permission to dwell within the city itself, causing them to be given houses in gardens, wherein they might dwell with security and much convenience.

The kings of the Christians now begged peace from the Moslemah, but Almudafar made reply to the effect that he could not live at peace with them, and would not consent to more than a truce of two years. The conditions for this truce were then made by the intervention of Abdallah Ben Ab-

* "Allahoma is an invocation of the Creator, which expresses the utmost warmth of love, trust, and reverence: it has all the force and energy of the interjection, without its form.—*Condé.*

delaziz, Wali of Toledo, who was one of the family of the Meruans, was a kinsman of the king, and had been a great friend of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, whom he had accompanied in many of his campaigns, but more especially in the incursions made by Almanzor against the people of Gallicia.

This Abdallah had also contracted a close friendship with the king of the Christians, who frequently sent him magnificent presents in vases of gold and silver. And the commencement of that amicable intercourse was on this wise: among the captives taken in one of his irruptions, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz had found a very beautiful damsel, whose graces of demeanor, with her gentle sweetness and high cultivation of mind, had subdued the heart of Abdallah, by whom she was beloved without measure; but having been informed that the damsel was the daughter of the Christian king, the general sent her back with all her attendants to her father's court, nor would he accept any ransom for one of the number.

The years of peace accorded by that truce having elapsed, Almudafar then prepared once more to make incursions on the Comarcas of the Christians. He destroyed the fortresses which they had constructed, cut up the tilled ground, and took much spoil, with many captives. The walls of Avila were demolished by his order; and, proceeding to Salamanca, he thence pushed forward into the interior of Gallicia and Portugal. In his backward march, the Hagib took his way by the shores of the Douro, destroying the fortresses of Gormaz and Uxada as he proceeded. These things done, Abdelmelic returned conqueror to Cordova, where he arrived with a large force of cavalry. This took place in the year 398, and in the same year he marched again upon Gallicia, taking in his company the young Manser, son of Almaan Ben Zeiri, the Wali of Fez.

On this expedition, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar rode at the head of four thousand cavaliers, all clothed in cuirasses and coats of mail glittering like the stars, their horses also being furnished with caparisons of silk having a doubled lining. That body was followed by the cavalry of Andalusia and Africa—soldiers well inured to war, and most of

whom had distinguished themselves in many a perilous encounter. These troops were led by the Wali of Toledo, the Governor of Badalyos, and the young Manser Ben Almaan, who was mounted on a fiery war-horse, furious as a lion of the desert, and partaking of all that animosity to the foe which was felt by his valiant rider.

The Christians came forth to meet the Moslemah host with infinite bravery; but, although they were the heroes of their time, men who had acquired their experience in many battles, and were familiar with all the terrors and cruelties of the hottest fight, yet they were thrown into confusion, defeated, and put to flight, the forces of the Hagib falling upon them like dragons, and at length forcing them from a field which they would yet not abandon until it had been died a deep red with their blood.

The pursuit was taken up by Abdelmelic Almudafar himself, who followed the Infidels with his cavalry; but they, having obtained a partial refuge among the asperities of a somewhat difficult pass, recovered from their dismay. They then renewed the sanguinary combat, and fought like raging tigers, insomuch that the Moslemah there suffered great loss. The night coming on, put an end to the struggle, and under favour of the obscurity the Christians retired to their savage mountains; then the Moslemah, seeing the notable losses they had sustained, recrossed the frontier, and thence proceeding to Medina Toledo, they finally returned to Cordova.

No long time after the close of the campaign here in question, the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar fell sick, and that heavy malady increasing unto death, he departed in the moon of Safar in the year 399, not without grave suspicions that he had been poisoned. His death was deeply regretted by all good men; and his bier was accompanied to the burial-place by all the nobles of the city. Abdelmelic, the son of Almanzor, governed the state with much prudence and prosperity during a period of six years and four months.

In this year there also died the preceptor of the Hagib Abdelmelic Almudafar, Ahmed Ben Abdelaziz Ben Ferazi Ben Abi Hubab of Cordova, a wise and excellent man.

He had lived ninety years, and was buried in the Macbora or cemetery of the Rusafa. The prayer was made for him by the Cadi Ahmed Ben Dhecuen.

CHAP. CIV.—Of the government of Abderahman, son of Almanzor, and of his death.

The King Hixem El Muyad Billah, who had no will but that of his servants, received from them the proposal to appoint Abderahman, brother of Abdelmelic Almudafar, his Hagib, and he did so accordingly. In this Abderahman, who was a captain of his guard, the king hoped to find the high qualities and good fortune which had distinguished and accompanied his father and brother; but it is a common thing for man to be mistaken in his judgments and disappointed in his hopes: God alone is omniscient.

When Amaan* Ben Zeiri was made acquainted with the choice of the new Hagib, he sent rich presents, which were offered to Abderahman Ben Muhamad Almanzor by the hands of the young Manser, son of Amaan Ben Zeiri, who was then residing in Cordova as a hostage for his father's fidelity. Among the gifts thus presented were one hundred and fifty horses of the most generous race: and the Hagib Abderahman, well content with the courtesy of Amaan, did great honour to the envoys of that Ameer, giving them rich vestments and precious jewels, with other marks of favour: he also sent the young Manser back to his father. More than ever bound to the Hagib by that obligation, Amaan Ben Zeiri collected the best horses that could be found in Barbary, and these he despatched into Andalusia to the number of one thousand, than which a more costly and valuable gift was never sent from Almagreb to Spain.

Now the Hagib Abderahman Ben Muhamad was a young man much devoted to his pleasures; he spent the day in

* Or Alman, as elsewhere written. Our author, following his Arabic authorities with scrupulous fidelity, and seeking his materials in the pages of many writers, adopts the orthography now of one and now of another, a practice of which we here have an instance.—Tr.

the elegant occupations of chivalry, and the night in festive entertainments, never having been accustomed to the severity of manners, the grave application to the business of government, and the toils of war, in which the days and nights of his father and brother had been employed; he was altogether occupied by the pleasures and pastimes of the court. Yet Abderahman was of his nature a frank and cordial youth, nor by any means the worthless and indolent person whom he is by some writers declared to have been. Those who describe him as a man without self-respect, and the disgrace of his lineage, and who affirm that he merited nothing better than deposition from his office, are mere detractors.

Possessing great riches, Abderahman was so generous in giving, as to border on prodigality: in his person and the height of his stature he resembled his father Almanzor, and even for that circumstance was greatly beloved by the people, who applauded all his levities, and found something to admire in his most extravagant tastes. He lived in the closest intimacy with the King Hixem El Muyad Billah: but the familiarity of princes is often fatal to him who enjoyeth the same—rarely doth it endure—very rarely hath it found a happy termination,—whether because the man so privileged having nothing more to wish, is apt to become negligent of his service and exacting in his expectations, or whether, losing his judgment in the giddiness of his height, he gives occasion to the unquiet spirit of ambition, which is ever mining the edifices of vanity, to work his downfall, is not here to be discussed,—it shall suffice us to know, that the instability of his condition who lives on the breath of princes is a truth universally acknowledged.

Now the King Hixem El Muyad Billah had no son to succeed him in the empire, and although his age was not such as to make his having one improbable, yet the young Hagib Abderahman, consulting only his inconsiderate vanity, had the boldness to propose that his sovereign should declare him the future successor to the throne. But in this he did not consider the kinsmen of the king, of whose opinions on the subject he made no account whatever. Confiding in the unstable inclinations of the people, who loved and blessed him, with a blind devotion on the part of some, and

on that of others with a better founded affection, resulting from their respect to the memory of his father, he continued to press the matter, until he had persuaded King Hixem to accede to his wishes; the public declaration of the king's purpose to be suspended only until after Ahderahman Ben Almanzor should return from his first expedition against the Christians, in which he hoped to obtain a brilliant success.

These things were as yet discussed in secret only, and within the halls of the Alcazar; yet suspicions of what was intended did not fail to be aroused by those slight circumstances which ever betray what the parties concerned believe they are ably concealing, and the hatred and indignation of all connected with the house of Meruan was at once awakened thereby. These feelings were more especially manifested by a cousin of the king, a young man called Muhamad Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir, a young man of much bravery, who was the presumed successor to the throne, in the event of there being no son born to King Hixem. This Muhamad not being able to endure any longer the pretensions of the Hagib Abderahman, whom the people called Anasir, departed for Cordova, and repaired to the frontiers of Castile, in which country he assembled numerous forces. Many Alcaides holding rule in that district then joined the party of Muhamed Ben Hixem, and having called their banners together, they entered Andalusia, making the vain hopes and unreasonable aspirations of the Hagib Abderahman a subject of consideration and disapproval in all the towns through which they passed. These partizans of Muhamad declared that the Hagib had compelled King Hixem's assent to his desire for being declared successor to the throne, and had acted without any regard to the respect due from his family to the royal house of Meruan. It was not difficult to persuade the nobles to oppose themselves to that design, and the rather as many of them were already sufficiently envious of the power monopolized by the Alabaries, as the family and partizans of the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer, El Moaferi, named Almanzor, had long been called.

When Abderahman Ben Muhamad received intelligence

of what had been done, and saw the tempest approaching, he took arms with infinite diligence, and sallied forth from Cordova with the African cavalry and guard of the king, hoping to defeat and disembarrass himself of his enemies before they could have time to increase and concentrate their power. But scarcely had the Hagib left the city, before Muhamad Ben Hixem was informed of his departure by the Vizier Iza Ben Said and others attached to his party, who furthermore took care to let him know that the garrison of Cordova was not a strong one. Acting on that intelligence, Muhamad divided his forces into two bands, and marching by remote ways, he hastened with the utmost celerity to the capital, which he entered with the flower of his cavalry. At once possessing himself of the Alcazar, Muhamad likewise seized the person of King Hixem; and that done, he published an edict deposing the Hagib Abderahman Ben Almanzor from his office.

Thus, then, did malicious fortune begin suddenly to perturb and disarrange the previously prosperous affairs of Spain.

But now the Hagib Abderahman, receiving notice in his turn of what had taken place, was filled with a violent anger, and, in opposition to the advice of his counsellors, returned immediately to Cordova, confiding more implicitly than he should have done in that unstable thing the inclination of the people, and supposing that he should be borne forward to empire by the popular breath. He entered the city with his cavalry, meeting no resistance; but when he had reached the palace of the Alcazar, he found that position occupied by a large force, consisting of all the principal men of Cordova, with a great mass of the common people, now become the partizans of Muhamad Ben Hixem.

A sanguinary combat then ensued, the cavalry of Abderahman breaking and dispersing that multitude at the first onset; but the deposed Hagib soon found to his astonishment that the assembled populace did not respond to his appeal as he had so confidently anticipated: many paid no regard to his voice, once so potent among them, but cried "Death to him! death to him!" It is true that the cavaliers by whom Abderahman was attended cut down all before them; but the numbers of their opponents perpetually

increasing, he was at length compelled to order a retreat, and endeavour to force his way out of the city. This could be effected only by making a cruel carnage among the people; but Abderahman, fighting like a lion, succeeded in defending himself and covering his retiring friends, until a great number of his people had died around him. Still he made good his retreat like the valiant man that he was, until, attacked from behind and on each side, as well as in front, his horse falling dead beneath him, after a fearful struggle, he lay at the mercy of his enemies, pierced with the thrusts of many a lance. Thus badly wounded, he was dragged to the presence of Muhamad Ben Hixem, who instantly commanded his people to crucify the conquered Hagib; an atrocity which was committed without the loss of a moment. Thus died Abderahman, son of the great Almanzor, and brother to the illustrious Abdelmelic Almudafar. Yet there are still men to be found who can venture to confide their fate to the changeful and ungrateful people. The death of Abderahman Ben Muhamad took place on an unhappy Tuesday, the 18th of the moon Giumada,* in the year 399.† He had held the government four months.

And now the name of him who but a few days before was the object of the popular admiration, was heard only to be vituperated and made an object of calumny by those who had scarcely ceased from blessing him for the benefits received at his hands. The wealth of Abderahman was confiscated to the use of the state, and he was never mentioned but in terms of obloquy and contempt,—the vulgar crowd called him "Sanchuelo," and his friends dared not defend his memory,—nay, they could not venture to appear in public without subjecting themselves to the insolent aggressions of the base multitude.

Muhamad Abdelgiabar was meanwhile proceeding on the path of his ambition, disregarding the Alameries, who were

* Homaidi affirms that the unfortunate Abderahman Ben Almanzor was crucified in the moon of Regeb; but the dates of subsequent events confirm that given above, which is the period assigned by writers of the highest authority.—*Condé.*

† A.D. 1008.

nevertheless neither few in number nor insignificant in power: he availed himself of the popular favour which he momentarily enjoyed, and caused those of his party to present a supplication to King Hixem, entreating the monarch to appoint Muhamad his Hagib. Succeeding in this first attempt, he next,—knowing that the Africans of the guard, who were for the most part of the Zenete Cabilas, had incurred the detestation of the multitude,—commanded that body to depart from the palace, and even from the capital; an order by which he secured to himself the abhorrence of those troops, as well as of their generals and other superior officers, who belonged to the noblest families of Africa.

The new Hagib next appointed Chalaf Ben Meruan Ben Omeya Ben Haywat, known as El Sahari, to be President to the Council of State; therein according him the preference over the Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova, Aben Dhaknen. Chalaf Ben Meruan was called El Sahari, from Sahara Kaywat, a town in the Spanish Algarve, which had belonged to his great-grandfather. Before becoming president of the council he had been Cadi of Toledo, an office to which he was appointed by the Hagib Abderahman Almudafar on his return from his travels in the East, but which he had resigned on the death of that ruler and of the Wali of the city, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz.

The Hagib Muhamad Ben Hixem furthermore selected the Cadi Ahmed Ben Abderahman Ben Said, El Huzami, a man greatly esteemed for his learning and other merits, to be Walilcoda or Chief Justice of the Algarbia of Cordova. To his own son Obeidala he gave the government of Toledo, sending with him as his vizier the renowned poet, Suleiman Ben Muhamad Ben Batal, called Abu Ayoub of Badalyos, a man of singular genius, who was the especial favourite of the Hagib Muhamad Ben Hixem.

Among the first cares of Muhamad was that of removing from the person of the king all the old and trusted servants to whose ministrations he had become accustomed, but who were now replaced by others belonging to the party of the new Hagib. A few days after having effected this change, desiring to set himself above the reach of fortune's caprices, and further to try how far his destiny would bear him,

Muhamad sent about a report to the effect that the king was attacked by a dangerous malady. Then, seeing that the people took but little interest in the condition of their sovereign, while the Walies, Viziers, and Alchatibes already regarded himself as the future successor to the throne, he resolved to assassinate the unfortunate Hixem; but the Alameri Wadha, who was chamberlain to King Hixem, and much attached to his person, succeeded in dissuading Muhamad from that purpose: acting with equal boldness and prudence, he found means to convince the Hagib that he might very well succeed in his designs without taking the life of the poor king, who, living retired as he did, and being besides well guarded, would present no obstacle to the views entertained by his Hagib. He added, that Muhamad Ben Hixem might take all the precautions needful for his security, and even suggested himself such as he thought most efficacious.

Persuaded by all the reasons urged by Wadha El Alameri, Muhamad agreed with the chamberlain that King Hixem should be shut up in great secresy, the guardianship of his person being confided to one in whom the Hagib felt much confidence.

Many authors tell us that the conspirators placed their sovereign in the house of the Vizier Husein Ben Hay, and that having sought out a man who closely resembled King Hixem in age, height, and features, they carried off that person in the night-time, strangled, or, as others say, drowned him, and having laid his remains in the bed of the sovereign, then spread about the report of Hixem's malady, which has been mentioned above; and, as if by his order, performed the solemnity of declaring the Hagib Muhamad to be his successor. The Walies and Viziers having assembled, they published that declaration, and a few hours afterwards the intelligence of Hixem's death was also made public. This done, they placed the supposed king on the bier, and buried him with great pomp, his sepulchre being erected in the first court of the Alcazar; all which took place on the 25th day of the moon Giumada Postrera, in the year 399.

CHAP. CV.—Of the reign of Muhamad el Mohdi Billah.

On the day when this pretended burial of the king was effected, Muhamad Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir was proclaimed King of Spain in Cordova. He called himself El Mohdi* Billah; and the prayer was made for him in all the Alminbares of the kingdom. The coins were likewise immediately struck in his name. Enthroned by these means, one of the earliest acts of the new king's reign was to repeat and confirm the order previously given for the expulsion of the African guard, and which he now caused to be executed with the utmost rigour. Offended by this decision, the officers assembled, and, taking counsel together, they resolved to resist the order: they prepared to use their arms for that purpose accordingly, being animated in their determination by the captain of the guard, Hixem Raxid Ben Suleiman Ben Abderahman Anasir, who declared the new king a traitorous assassin of his sovereign, and encouraged the Zenetes, with the men of Barbary, to resist his commands to the death.

The conspirators then proceeded to surround the Alcazar, demanding the head of him whom they called the unjust usurper of the throne: but Muhamad sallied forth against them at the head of the Andalusian guard, when a sanguinary combat ensued. The inhabitants of Cordova quickly assembled in vast numbers, and, taking part with the Andalusians against the Africans, compelled the latter to retire; but they made a fearful carnage among the citizens, who had offered themselves with more boldness than prudence to that unequal struggle, which lasted all that evening and through a great part of the night; nay, the conflict was recommenced with the first approach of the dawn.

The Africans were nevertheless finally compelled to abandon their quarters and make their way from the city as they best could, having to contest every step with the countless multitude, whose wish it was to see them utterly

* This appellation implies Tranquillizer or Conciliator; yet the subsequent events did but ill accord with the hopes held out by the title thus chosen.—*Condé.*

exterminated, but whom they repelled with extraordinary valour. In that perilous retreat, the brave general of the Africans, Hixem Ben Suleiman, fell wounded with his falling horse in the midst of a troop of Andalusians, who bore him to the presence of Muhamad; the latter immediately commanding that his head should be struck off and thrown over the city wall in the face of the African troops, who had succeeded in forcing their way from the capital.

When they were thus made acquainted with the death of their general, the infuriated Africans hurled loud cries of vengeance against their enemies, and thirsting for blood that should worthily avenge that of their leader, they chose as his successor one in whom they hoped to find a terrible denunciator of woe to the destroyers. This was a cousin of the unhappy general whose head lay before them, even Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir, a man of much prudence, as well as of indomitable valour.

This leader, considering that the forces he commanded did not suffice to maintain the siege of the city and resist the power of Muhamad, then struck his camp,—and some say that this was done at once, being Thursday, the 5th day of the moon Xawal, in that same year of 399;—but we are assured by Homaidi that Suleiman Ben Alhakem made another attempt to force the Alcazar, and obtain possession of Muhamad's person, when, being once more compelled to retreat and leave the city, he departed to the frontiers of Gallicia, where he sought aid from the King of the Christians, Count Sancho. Homaidi adds that the latter assured him of his friendship, entrusted him with several fortresses on that line of frontier, which he permitted him to occupy with his troops, and received in return certain promises from Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who agreed to procure for the Christian King the concession of many strong places which he required for the defence of his frontier, and which he was to receive, on condition of his then assisting the Africans in their attack on Muhamad Ben Hixem, calling himself King of Spain.

This agreement having been made, Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir marched against Cordova with an auxiliary force of Christian cavaliers—brave and select troops. These assailants were met by Muhamad Ben Hixem, who sallied

forth on receiving intelligence of their approach, with a very powerful host. It was about the middle of the moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 400, that the two armies encountered each other, which they did at Gebal Quintos, when a fearful contest ensued. The battle was commenced by the Andalusian cavalry, and after a sanguinary combat of several hours, more than twenty thousand of the Cordovan troops lay dead or wounded on the field.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan* tells us that in this battle Abu Othman Ben Algezar, of Cordova, must have lost his life, since it was known that he had been seen fighting in the mêlée, but he was never beheld from that moment, either living or dead; and a similar fate befel that illustrious poet the Vizier Aly Ben Fath of Cordova, who never appeared again, either in life or death, after having entered into the horrors of that exterminating conflict, which took place on a Saturday in the middle of the moon of Rebie Primera, as we have said.

Muhamad Ben Hixem ultimately fled with the shattered remnant of his host: he crossed the mountains, and passing the plains of Calatrava, arrived at Toledo, where his son Obeidala held the appointment of Wali. By the intervention of Obeidala, Muhamad also endeavoured to obtain the assistance of the Christians, and it was agreed that for a sum of money Count Bermond and Count Armengudi should supply the Moslemah with auxiliaries, whereupon those brave generals of Afranc† marched to his aid with a powerful body of their troops. By these negociations, Muhamad Ben Hixem was detained at Toledo for the space of something more than six months.

CHAP. CVI.—Of SULEIMAN ALMOSTAIN BILLAH.

After his victory of Gebal Quintos, Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Suleiman Ben Anasir pressed forward with

* A writer of the period, and an eye-witness of some of the scenes which he describes.—Tr.

† France.

his conquering host to Cordova, where the people of the city were desirous of opposing his entrance; but, in pursuance of advice given by the Alameri Wadha, they ultimately opened their gates to the victor. Then Suleiman, distrusting, and not without good cause, the inhabitants of Cordova, not only because of their ancient enmity to his Africans, but on account of the hatred which must have been awakened in their hearts by the recent slaughter of the citizens at Gebal Quintos, and still more because of his Christian auxiliaries,—Suleiman, I say, declined to enter the city at that moment: he concerted measures for maintaining the tranquillity of the capital with the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri, declaring that he did not desire to oppress the inhabitants by the presence of guests so little likely to be welcome as those he had in his company; with other pretexts of much apparent courtesy. Thus encamping with his army in the surrounding Comarcas, he remained inactive until the 15th day of Rebie Postrera, in the year 400, at which period he made his entrance into the capital with his African cavalry, and was there proclaimed king, receiving the appellation of Almostain Billah.

At this same time, as we are told by Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, the people had risen against the Africans in many parts of Andalusia, and at Malaga, as that author relates, the populace tore in pieces the Havawi, Chalaf Ben Mesaudi, better known as Aben Omaina. Chalaf had entreated permission to make his prayer with two prostrations, as the sole favour that he desired at the hands of his murderers, and they had affected to grant that request, but before he had completed his supplications, they crushed his head to atoms with an enormous stone which they cast upon him for that purpose: they then tore his still quivering body limb from limb.

Suleiman Ben Alhakem passed the greater part of his time at Medina Alzahra, and there he kept his auxiliaries. He changed the Alcaides of some among the fortresses in Andalusia, placing others, who enjoyed his confidence, in their office: he visited numerous cities, and caused justice to be extended to all men wherever he appeared; but he was in perpetual movement, and his life was one of continual march and disquietude, because of the distrust he felt

of the people of Cordova. All the towns on the frontier were of his party, from Tortosa in the east of Spain to Alisbona in the west; and in many of the cities Suleiman Ben Alhakem Ben Anasir took care to place generals as governors whom he knew to be devoted to his interests.

Among the cavaliers of his African guard were two brothers of the royal family of the Beni Edris. These illustrious generals, both very young, were called Aly Ben Hamud and Alcasim Ben Hamud Ben Meruan. The elder of the two, Suleiman Ben Alhakem now placed in the government of Cebta and Tangiers in Africa; while he appointed the younger to that of Algezira Alhadra on the Spanish coast.

Now there were certain of the Cordovans who, to sow discord among the Africans, incited Meruan, the cousin of Suleiman, to rise up in revolt against the latter, promising to aid him with all their power, and declaring that the whole country would be glad to see him in the seat of his cousin, Suleiman Ben Alhakem; the latter being, as they assured Meruan, abhorred by every man. But these machinations were made known to him against whom the conspirators were contriving their mischief; and having instituted so minute an enquiry as to render himself sure of the facts, he caused fifty of the principal conspirators to have their heads taken off; his cousin Meruan he shut up in a tower of the city wall.

With the Sclavonians also did Suleiman Ben-Alhakem fall into discord, and the cause of that misunderstanding was as follows: they had maliciously advised him to assassinate his Christian auxiliaries, remarking that, after all, those Infidels were his natural enemies, and that the putting them to death would conciliate the affection of the Andalusians. But Suleiman rejected these counsels with bitter reproofs, declaring that he neither could nor would fail in his word to any man, nor think of recalling the promises of security once given, least of all towards those from whom he had received such effectual aid as that lent him by the Christian troops. But Suleiman was not without suspicion that the murderous treachery proposed to him might be committed even against his will, and strongly as his determination had been expressed: he therefore dismissed the Christian

auxiliaries with many gifts, and with promises in still greater abundance.

In like manner did Suleiman oppose resistance to the eager representations and repeated prayers of Wadha El Alameri, who had discovered to him the secret of King Hixem's existence, and entreated him to make known that fact to the people, replacing the imprisoned monarch on his throne; a step by which El Alameri assured him he would gain the hearts of every good Mosleman. But Suleiman is said to have replied, "I wish it earnestly, Wadha; yet I see that this is not the time to entrust ourselves to hands so weak as those of Hixem: let this matter rest, then, for the present, but be sure that his hour will come." The only alteration made in the position of the King, therefore, was, that his gaoler and the place of his abode were changed; the guardianship of his person being confided to those in whom Suleiman hoped he might place it with security.

At this time there came intelligence to Cordova, informing Suleiman Ben Alhakem that Muhamad was approaching with a carefully selected body of men, from the Comarcas of Toledo, Valencia, and Murcia, his army being furthermore reinforced by the Christians of eastern Spain, already alluded to. The host of Muhamad counted thirty thousand Moslemah, and nine thousand Christians. But, although that was double the number of the troops that were at Suleiman's command, the latter did not hesitate to go forth, and meeting the enemy at a place called Acbat Albacar, situate about ten miles from Cordova, he attacked the united force of Moslemah and Christians with his usual intrepidity.

His African cavalry, with the people of Algarve and Merida, fought all the day with unflinching bravery; but at the setting of the sun they found themselves compelled to retreat before the more numerous troops of Muhamad Ben Hixem,—wherefore, favoured by the arrival of night, Suleiman determined to leave his camp, and marched with his army to Azahra, not daring to enter Cordova.

It now became evident that the Africans could remain no longer in Andalusia; and Suleiman, gathering such treasures as he had there, prepared to depart; but, to his great

regret, the troops could not be restrained from plundering the Alcazar; they even stripped the principal mosque of its lamps of gold and silver, its chains and precious crowns; nay, they took the costly jewels, rich hangings, and other valuables, from many of the more magnificent dwellings. What they could not carry off from these latter abodes was pillaged by the troops of Muhamad and by the Cordovans themselves, who entered those palaces after Suleiman and his Africans had left them. The latter were meanwhile proceeding by forced marches towards Algezira Alhadra, with intention to pass over into Africa.

Among those who died fighting in the obstinately contested battle of Acbat Albacar, was the noble and virtuous cavalier Aboala Ben Ahmed Ben Kindi of Cordova, known as El Taital, who fell by the side of Suleiman Ben Alhakem, as did also the Mocri or reader of the Aljama of Cordova, Suleiman Ben Hixem Ben Walid Ben Colaib, and Ahmed Ben Beril, with his master, the Mocri or reader Aben El Camer.

On the side of Muhamad Ben Hixem there fell the Cadi of Elvira, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, who was also a native of Cordova, with the ingenious poet Muhamad Ben Mesoadi El Bacheni, a man highly favoured by the kings of his time, and whose graceful verses were the delight of Andalusia. This battle of Acbat Albacar was fought in the year 400, and received the name of the Day of the Franks, because of the people of the Frankish countries who made part of the host.

CHAP. CVII.—Of the battle of Guadiaro, and the death of Muhamad Ben Hixem.

After his victory at Acbat Albacar, Muhamad Ben Hixem made his entry into Cordova in triumph, amidst the acclamations of the people, who called him their avenger and deliverer. One of his earliest acts was to appoint the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri to be the Hagib of his house, an office which he bestowed on him as a mark of confidence, certainly not unmerited by the Alameri. This done, he

remained but a few days in the capital, departing thence with all the force he could muster, and with the firm resolve to pursue the Africans and complete their downfall.

But inflated by his hardly-won victory, Muhamad Ben Hixem rashly ventured to attack the enemy before his troops had recovered from the fatigues of a forced march, and Suleiman, perceiving his advantage, did not fail to make the most of it. Exhorting his Africans to their duty, he concluded his short harrangue by these words: "This day must we contend till we conquer or remain on the field: there is no hope for us save in the might of our swords; wherefore let no man bend his neck to the scimitar of his enemy; but if we may not be victors, let us at least die avenged."

That said, the General of the Africans made ready for battle, and commenced the struggle with a desperate valour. The troops of Muhamad also fought with great steadiness and bravery; but they could not resist the impetuous onset of the African guard, who were fresher and less fatigued than themselves. Thus it came to pass that Suleiman soon broke and put to flight the wearied host of Muhamad Ben Hixem, who, turning bridle, fled precipitately, and paused not till he found himself in Cordova, to the near vicinity of which place Suleiman followed with his people in pursuit of their foes.

The vanquished Muhamad entered the city with but a few soldiers of his guard, but was followed after a time by the scattered and discomfited portions of his army, as well as by the remnant of the Christian auxiliaries, which had fled by different routes. He then set himself to strengthen the fortifications of the capital, restoring the towers, repairing whatever part had become dilapidated, and causing a deep fosse to be dug around the walls; all the citizens working at these fortifications both day and night.

Meanwhile, the best hopes of Muhamad Ben Hixem reposed in his Hagib, the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri, who possessed all his confidence, and commanded with absolute power in every department of the state. The principal employments were all conferred by the Hagib Wadha on his Alamerian followers; but Muhamad did not dare to refuse his assent, although the more prudent of his counsellors and prin-

cipal nobles were much displeased with that preponderance of the Sclavonian. The people, too, oppressed and fatigued by the continual labours imposed on them, as well as by the insolence of such as thought they had fortune in their favour, began to abandon the party of Muhamad Ben Hixem, whose star was commencing its decline. The Sclavonians completed these evils by the dangerous counsels which they gave their falling chief, whom they prevailed on to banish some of the most influential Xeques and Viziers from the city, under various pretexts: of some it was averred that they had held seditious discourse among themselves; others were accused of pretended conspiracies; and others, again, of being disaffected to the interests of Muhamad Ben Hixem; all which concurred to produce a degree of hatred to the latter which was perpetually exasperated by the oppressive insolence of his imprudent partizans.

In the moon of Dylcada of this year 400, there died at Cordova that holy person, Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir Bengmêl El Omaya, called El Firexi, a man of most austere life: he had been a brave border chief in his youth, but was now very old, and had become blind, not from his years only, but from much weeping because of the fear of God. He was born in the year 301, and when he died had attained the age of ninety-eight years. The interment of Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir Bengmêl was accompanied by a large concourse of the people; and among the poor his death was much lamented. Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that he died on a Sunday, and that his burial took place on the Monday following: he was interred in the Macbora or cemetery of the suburb, immediately after the Alasar or afternoon prayer. From the same author we learn that Muhamad Ben Hixem El Mohdi himself accompanied the bier, and made the Azala or prayer for the departed, being attended by all the principal persons of the city. He affirms that so large a company was never before seen at any funeral in Cordova, and adds the following words,—"Muhamad Ben Hixem made the Azala for Suleiman El Firexi, and nineteen days only had elapsed thereafter when he was assassinated himself. May God grant him pardon!"

Now the general of the Christian auxiliaries, even the Frankish Count Armengudi, was at this time secretly informed that Muhamad Ben Hixem had resolved to betray him, and was about to depart from the promise of security and safe conduct assured to him and his people, preparing the pretext of a revolt among the populace for the purpose of disarming his troops and subsequently depriving them of life. The Christian, therefore, not disregarding the secret intelligence thus received, took care to hasten his departure under the colour of excuses which he knew how to make, and, in despite of all Muhamad's protestations, the Count drew his troops from the capital; but, on taking leave of Muhamad, he consented to be the bearer of letters exhorting the Wali of Toledo, Obeidala, to assemble whatever force he could command, and hasten to the assistance of his father, who was shut up in Cordova by the Africans. Muhamad wrote in similar terms to the Walies of Merida and Saragossa, as well as to the Alcaides of the frontiers.

But now was it found that all those commanders had excuses and good reasons to allege, by the force of which they were prevented from complying with that request; all declined obedience to the orders thus received; and the people, finding that no succours arrived, began to vituperate Muhamad Ben Hixem as they had vituperated Abderahman Ben Almanzor; but of Muhamad they furthermore declared that his good fortune had abandoned him from the moment that he had allied himself with Infidels; nor could they sufficiently anathematize him for that cause.

Well hath it been said, that the love and esteem of the people goes and comes with the breezes of fortune—they neither approve nor condemn the actions of those they judge; but as these are successful or unsuccessful, so do they applaud or vituperate. The base and bad man who conquers, is a hero; the great and good one who is conquered becomes the object of their scorn—he is the basest of wretches, and worthy of nothing better than the gibbet.

The African light companies soon approached within a short distance of Cordova; and immediately after this fact became known, it was remarked that many of the most

influential among the citizens had disappeared from the city. These were presently found to have passed over to the camp of Suleiman Ben Alhakem. Muhamad now perceived that his fortune was deserting him: he saw that in proportion as his own party diminished did that of his enemy increase: even his guard had fallen into discord and was divided by factions. The Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri availed himself of that occasion to augment the fears of his lord, who, destitute of good counsel, no longer knew what to determine or to whom he could have recourse. He insinuated suspicions of secret conspiracy, giving Muhamad more serious cause than had before existed to distrust his guards. Finally, this Hagib, finding himself to be absolute master in Cordova, and perceiving the vacillation of Muhamad Ben Hixem, persuaded the latter to make known the existence of Hixem El Muyad Billah; and, without waiting an especial mandate from him to that effect, he drew the concealed king from his prison, and presented him to the people in the Macsura or Royal Tribune of the Great Aljama. This was done on the 7th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 400.

All the city was in commotion as the rumour went abroad that their King, Hixem Ben Alhakem, was still in life; and when they saw standing before their eyes him whom they had followed to the tomb, all the past seemed to be but as a dream. An immense concourse of people collected before the mosque; and when the Sclavonian Wadha El Alameri brought out their king and placed him before them, they received him with the most hearty demonstrations of joy, and accompanied him with unceasing outcries of applause and jubilation even to his palace.

Muhamad Ben Hixem had meanwhile concealed himself in a remote apartment of that building, confiding in the Sclavonian Wadha, and hoping that all would eventually be well with him; but on the day of the Easter of Victims, which was the 10th of Dylhagia, he was led by the Sclavonian Anbaro to the foot of the throne—that throne which he had himself so recently occupied, but on which the legitimate King, Hixem El Muyad Billah, had just taken his seat. He was then reproached with much asperity by Hixem, who exclaimed, "Now shalt thou taste the bitter

fruit of thy disloyalty and unmeasured ambition;" that said, the king commanded the executioner to take off his head, which was done, when, being placed on a pike, the dissevered head was carried by a Vizier through the streets of the capital at the speed of a horse, the body being cast into the public square, after having been cut into many pieces, which were gathered up on the expiration of the third day, and were then buried in the court of a mosque. The head of Muhamad was ultimately sent by King Hixem to his rival, Suleiman Ben Alhaken, who was then at Citawa, and whom the king hoped to intimidate by that example, thereby inducing him to return to his allegiance.

The time during which Muhamad Ben Hixem held command, from the moment of his revolt to that of his decapitation, was sixteen months: of this period he had spent six at Toledo, and six more had been passed in contentions with Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who had been as long either in the Comarcas of Cordova or in the capital itself. After the battle of Acbat Albocar, Muhamad, who had previously called himself El Mohdi Billah, was named Adafir, and was also known as Abul Walid. The mother that bore him was called Mozna, and he had a son named Abdallah, who died before him and left no posterity.

The head of his enemy, even Muhamad Ben Hixem, was received by Suleiman Ben Alhakem as a most precious gift, and knowing the preparations making at Toledo by the Wali Obeidala, son of Muhamad, for marching against him, he took advantage of that present to excite a new enemy against King Hixem and his Cordovans: commanding the head of Muhamad to be embalmed, he sent it to Obeidala, with ten thousand mitcals of gold, and a letter wherein he wrote him an account of all that had taken place in the capital, adding, "Thus doth King Hixem repay those who serve him and restore him to his throne: beware of falling into the hands of that ungrateful and cruel tyrant; but if thou art seeking a companion in thy vengeance, him thou shalt find in Suleiman Ben Alhakem."

Obeidala received the mournful gift, with the letter by which it was accompanied, and which produced all the effect that Suleiman had desired: he was filled with a furious anger, and having interred the head of his father Muhamad

Ben Hixem, with great pomp in the court of the principal mosque, he wrote letters to Suleiman, in which he accepted his offers of friendship, and vowed an eternal hatred to King Hixem El Muyad Billah.

On the 7th day of the moon of Giumada Primera there died at Cordova the Cadi of the Aljama, Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic Ben Haxem, a man of extraordinary wisdom and rectitude. The Hagib of King Hixem Ben Alhakem, Wadha El Alameri, was present at his burial, which took place in the Macbora or cemetery of Coraixi; the prayer was made for him by the Cadi Abu Becri Ben Wafid, and the ablutions of the dead were performed by Abu Omar Ben Afif: all the inhabitants of the city attending the remains of Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic to the place of their repose.

In the year 401, and on the night of Thursday the 19th day of the moon of Giumada Primera, there also died the learned Yahye Ben Amer Ben Husein Ben Nabil of Cordova, a sage who had travelled much in the East. He had been chosen a member of the council of state by the intervention of the Cadi Abul Abes Ben Dhacuen, and was buried with great pomp in the Farenic Macbora after the prayer of Alazar.

CHAP. CVIII.—Of the siege of Cordova, the entrance of the Hagib Wadha El Alamari into Medina Toledo, and that of Suleiman Ben Alhakem into Cordova.

King Hixem confirmed the Sclavonian Wadha in his office of Hagib, and that general made several sallies against the Africans commanded by Suleiman Ben Alhakem, in all of which he obtained the advantage; but knowing that the Wali Obeidala was about to join his forces, which formed a select and well-appointed army, to those of Suleiman, he committed the government and defence of the capital to the two generals, Zabor and Anbaro, who were, like himself, Sclavonians, while he proceeded to the territory of Toledo, hoping to arrest the march of Obeidala, and demanding aid

for that purpose from the people on the frontiers of Castile as well as from the King of the Christians. From the latter he received a reply to the effect that Suleiman Ben Alhakem had given the Christian six fortresses on condition of receiving aid at his hands, but that as he would rather assist King Hixem El Muyad Billah than the rebel Suleiman, he would send auxiliaries to him instead, provided that he were assured of certain other fortresses which he named.

Hearing this, the Sclavonian Wadha did not await the decision of the king his master, but hastening to make his agreement with the Infidel, he assented to those conditions; when the Christian auxiliaries immediately joined him. The Alameri then prepared for his attack on Toledo, whence the Wali Obeidala had already departed, and Wadha, having secret intelligence with certain of the inhabitants, soon obtained possession of the place.

Receiving an account of what had happened, Obeidala then returned to seek his enemies, and encountered the host of the Sclavonian general, with his Christian auxiliaries, in the vicinity of Maqueda. There they fought a sanguinary battle, wherein the forces of Obeidala were defeated and fled towards Cordova; but, being closely pursued by the enemy, Obeidala, with many of his cavaliers, fell into the hands of Wadha El Alameri. Among those who were thus unfortunate were Muhamad Ben Temar and Ahmed Ben Muhamad Ben Wasim of Toledo, one of the most distinguished persons of that city, and a very learned man. That cavalier was nailed to a cross, whereon he repeated the Sura Yax, the soldiers cruelly wounding him in the face with their javelins until the head became detached from the stake, and, falling forwards, the unhappy noble then hung suspended by his girdle, in which condition he expired. This deplorable event took place, according to Abu Meruan Ben Hayan, in the moon of Regeb of the year 401; but according to other authorities, in the moon Xaban of the same year.

Obeidala was taken to Cordova under a strong guard, and had scarcely arrived there before the king commanded that he should be beheaded. That Wali was then in the

flower of his age; and when the people heard that he had been taken while fighting against the Christians, they vituperated the Hagib Wadha El Alameri with bitter violence, and murmuring against King Hixem and his generals, they called them heretics and bad Moslemah.

The government of Toledo had been meanwhile entrusted by the Hagib Wadha to Abu Ismael Dilnoun, a very powerful Xeque and noble of that city, who, by his authority and influence, had facilitated the entrance of the Hagib therein. Having thus taken measures for the tranquillity of the place, the Sclavonian Wadha, well satisfied with his success, dismissed his Christian auxiliaries with many gifts, and promises in still greater abundance; after which he returned to Cordova. He was there received with much honour by the king, who granted him many favours for his Sclavonians and Alameries, on whom he conferred Alcaidias and other offices in the south of Spain,—as for example the governments of Tadmir, Cartagena, Alâlfe, Alicant, Almeria, Denie, Xativa, and others; those who already held appointments of importance he confirmed in their charge.

But Suleiman and his Africans continued in the vicinity of Cordova, where they committed grievous devastations, cutting up the fields around Ecija, Carmona, and other towns on the shores of the Guadalquiver. The Hagib Wadha therefore sent his Sclavonian generals Zabor and Anbaro to engage the Africans, whom their troops encountered with varying fortunes for some time, but finally succeeded in driving them from the Guadalquiver and forcing them to take refuge in the mountains. Some relief was thereby given to the capital, which had already begun to feel the want of provisions very grievously, the people having long suffered cruel hunger, which at length caused a pestilence that kept all in terror of contagion.

In the year 401, on a Thursday, which was the 21st of the moon Dylcada, the Hafiz Obeidala El Moaiti of Cordova, called Abu Meruan, departed from this life. He was buried in the cemetery of the suburb, the prayer being said for him by his uncle, Obeidala Ben Abdallah, who performed that office at the request of the Cadi Ben Wefid.

This Hafiz was of the noble race of Omeya* Ben Abd Shems.

In the same year of 401, on a Sunday, which was the 11th of the moon Dylcada, died Ahmed Ben Aly Arabai El Begani, who had been reader in the Aljama of Cordova. This Ahmed Ben Aly had been chosen by the Hagib Almanzor as the preceptor of his son Abderahman, and was subsequently made a Cadi. King Hixem El Muyad Billah afterwards appointed him a member of the Council of State, where he became the associate of the Cadi Abu Beeri Ben Wefid. The year of his birth was 345.

On the night between Wednesday and Thursday, towards the close of the moon Dylcada in the same year, died also the noble cavalier Ahmed Ben Muhamad Ben Ahmed Ben Said, known as Aben Gezir El Omaya, who had been Alchatib of the Cadi Mondhir El Boluti: he died of the pestilence then prevailing, at his palace of Moqueiz, wherein he made his dwelling; and his bier was accompanied to the burial place by all the nobles of the city. At the beginning of that same moon had died the Prefect of the Builders, Abdallah Ben Said Ben Muhamad Ben Batri. To him were entrusted all things connected with the architecture of the Aljama and royal residences of the capital. He was, besides, Sahib Xarta of the city, and had ever enjoyed the favour of the kings, by whom his wisdom and integrity had caused Abdallah Ben Said to be much valued.

Now Suleiman Ben Alhakem had not remained unacquainted with the state of things in Cordova; he knew the discontent occasioned among the nobles by the undue influence conceded to the Sclavonians and Alameries; they t was that enjoyed all the confidence of the king, who distrusted his own kindred, and put no faith in his most loyal servants. Determined that he would not lose so favourable an opportunity, Suleiman therefore wrote to the Walies of Calatrava, Guadalaxara, Medina, Selim, and Saragossa, declaring to them that if they would give him aid against the Sclavonians, who were exercising a tyrannical sway at

* Of this house of Moaiti, the Arabian genealogists count up to sixteen ancestors in direct line—son following father without any interval in the succession.—*Condé.*

Cordova and in other cities of the kingdom, he would for his part assure them of their continuance in their governments, and not only so, but would cause those offices to descend by right of inheritance to their sons. The Walies thus appealed to were by that last promise assured of obtaining a concession which many of those ambitious rulers had long desired, and they made an agreement with Suleiman accordingly, sending him their banners without delay, and each being accompanied by a well-appointed force of foot and horse.

These things being made known to the Hagib Wadha El Alameri, and he, finding that the Walies of eastern Spain were about to march against him, made the king acquainted with these preparations for war, and the great movements then effecting in the provinces: he furthermore persuaded Hixem to write letters to Aly Ben Hamud, the Wali of Cebta and Tunis, as also to his brother Alcasim, Wali of Algezira Alhadra, whom he knew to be at variance with Suleiman Ben Alhakem, offering them great concessions and advantages of various kinds if they would come to his aid with all their power; nay, the Hagib even prevailed on King Hixem to promise that in the event of their ensuring to him the triumph which he desired to obtain over his foes, he would cause the elder of the two brothers, even Aly Ben Hamud, to be declared his successor to the throne.

Yet, when these letters were written, the Hagib did not send them, but kept them for some more opportune occasion — perhaps because he was himself somewhat doubtful of the measure, although it was he who had proposed it.

The year 402 passed over the heads of the Andalusians who continued in the endurance of very cruel sufferings from the ravages of the pestilence, as well as from the trials and afflictions of civil war: provisions were fast failing in the capital, misfortunes of all kinds were accumulating, and the discontent of the people increased in equal proportion. The populace, ever ready to murmur against the government, were rendered furious and unmanageable by all these calamities, and such of the inhabitants as were able to quit Cordova, did so, flying to

the mountains, or taking refuge in the smaller towns, as the case might be.

By means of these fugitives and by others of which he had contrived to obtain possession, Suleiman Ben Alhakem had meanwhile maintained an exchange of letters with certain of the more influential inhabitants; nay, some authorities affirm that even the Hagib Wadha himself was one among them; but this does not appear to be credible. Yet the King Hixem Ben Alhakem was assured that such was the case; and it was furthermore declared to him that his Sclavonian Hagib meditated the surrender of the city to his enemies. Then the unhappy Hixem, who believed all and feared all, caused the loyal Hagib to be thrown into prison. Immediately afterwards, those letters which the king had written, as above related, to the governor of Cebta and Algezira, were found to be still in Wadha's possession, and the hapless Hixem commanded that the head of his faithful servant should be struck off; thus forgetting in a moment of anger all the devotion and good service of so many years.

The king then named Hairan, the governor of Almeria, his Hagib; and as that general was a man of much prudence and valour, he was perhaps better calculated for the office thus conferred on him than any other noble then about the person of the monarch, whom he might have saved had the good fortune of that ill-fated prince not been now arrived at its close. Hairan was of the Sclavonian Alimeries, as the Hagib Wadha had been, and was the last of them who served King Hixem.

Algasenia, an accomplished poetess of Bagena, composed a long Casida of elegant verses in praise of Hairan Lord of Almeria and Hagib to King Hixem El Muyad Billah; these she presented to the general about this time, and they were very highly applauded by the distinguished spirits of the day.

Of a most benign and generous disposition, the new Hagib frequently prevented the fulfilment of the tyrannous orders issued by the king, who felt distrust of all the principal men of the city, and would not permit them to assemble in any place but the mosques, suspecting conspiracies in the most innocent meetings of the nobles. But

this oppression of his subjects, and the discontent which Hixem thus awakened in their hearts, was most favourable to Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who had long occupied Medina Azahrah with a numerous host, and now kept the capital closely besieged.

The Hagib Hairan was meanwhile doing his best to animate the guards and other troops to the defence of their king and the city; yet his efforts and exhortations produced but little effect. He performed his part as a good general should; but a city which does not care to defend itself is not easily to be preserved. One day, while Hairan, with his guards, was fighting at the gate of the Axarquia, and labouring to disperse a body of the Africans who were filling up the trenches, there arose a dispute between the inhabitants of the city and the troops still remaining faithful to the king, who were defending the second gate, but whom the traitors were then attacking with all the force they could assemble. Informed of this perilous disorder, the Hagib was compelled to abandon the important post which he was maintaining, for the purpose of repressing the rioters; since the royal troops and the people were performing the office of the enemy by cutting each other to pieces.

While Hairan was thus employed, admission was given to the besiegers by those who favoured them within the walls; the general then hastened with his guards to attempt their expulsion, and, opposing their entrance step by step, a sanguinary contest ensued, which did not close till nightfall, when the troops of Suleiman had obtained possession of all the towers and forts around the capital. The brave and faithful Hairan fell wounded among the few loyal and valiant cavaliers of Cordova, who were still animated by his example, and had resolved to die in their duty, when the Africans made themselves masters of the city.

But not long did the traitors who had delivered up their trust escape the punishment due to that treachery: the Africans and their auxiliaries made a cruel slaughter among the citizens, without respect to friends or foes, and for three days they sacked the place, paying no regard to the representations of those who, having been of their party, had hoped to profit by the treachery they had favoured, even

when taking no actual part in the matter. Frightful cruelties were committed on all sides. The learned and eloquent orator, Muhamad Casim El Halati, was inhumanly murdered in his own house, as was Chalaf Ben Salema Ben Chamis of Cordova, one of the Odules or sworn judges of the city, he also being assassinated in his chamber, and subsequently buried, without attendance or prayer, in the Macbora of Ben Abbas.

On the same day, Abu Salema El Zahid, Imaum of the Mosque of Ain Tar, was cut to pieces in his dwelling; and the wise Ayoub Ruch Bono, with Said Ben Mondhir, son of the Cadi of the Aljama, was likewise cruelly murdered; Muhamad Ben Abi Siar, a Sclavonian of the king's guard, then lying sick in his house, met the same fate, as did Abdallah Ben Husein, called El Garbali, an eminent architect of Cordova, who had constructed many splendid edifices and royal dwellings therein, with other buildings, all contributing to the public utility and convenience; he also having been cut to pieces by those barbarians in their horrible irruption into the capital, which took place on a most unfortunate Monday, the 6th day of the moon Xawal in the year 403. Nay El Badalyosi has even affirmed that the remains of Abdallah Ben Husein remained three days without burial, and that the body was at length taken to Nacbora Om Salema, where the remnants of his household yet living buried it without ablution, without a shroud, and without prayer; so great was the confusion and horror into which the afflicted people of Cordova were thrown by the murders, plunder, and violence of every kind to which they were subjected in those days of judgment.

No sooner had his troops entered the city, than Suleiman Ben Alhakem took possession of the Alcazar, at whose gate it was that the Hagib Hairan El Alameri had fallen wounded. Being covered by the corpses of other brave and noble cavaliers who had fallen with him, the general was sheltered from further injury, and lay there insensible among the dead; but in the course of the night his senses returned, and he found strength to free himself from the weight by which he was at once protected and oppressed. The soldiers, busied with their plunder, did not remark the figure thus rising from a heap of corpses,

and the mangled commander having become sensible to the realities of his position, continued to drag himself from the bodies around him, and at length reached a place of shelter which he found in the house of a poor but honourable citizen, where he remained unknown to all. and in that concealment was cured of his wounds.

Suleiman Ben Alhakem was soon proclaimed king, with the title of Adofar Bihulallah. The Sclavonians and other honourable servants of King Hixem made supplication for their lord to the conqueror: but what he did with that hapless prince was not known, nor has it even yet been ascertained with certainty, since he never was seen again either living or dead; neither did Hixem leave any succession, unless it were that of calamities and civil discords. The barbarians assassinated many noble Xeques in their dwellings; and, in addition to those already enumerated, may be mentioned the Sclavonian Muhamad Ben Zeyad, who had been a closely familiar friend of King Hixem. Those murderous wretches even burst into the harems of the principal inhabitants of Cordova,—and that profanation rendered them more odious than all their cruelties had done.

CHAP. CIX.—Of the government of king Suleiman ben Alhakem. of the new civil war, and of other events.

Tranquillity having been restored in the capital, King Suleiman dismissed his auxiliaries, towards whom he fulfilled all his promises, and they departed to their respective countries well content. He next deposed a large number of the Alameries from their employments and offices, which he gave to the Xeques and generals of his African Cabilas. He caused his father, Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir, who had been Wali of Cebta in the earlier part of King Hixem's reign, but had retired into a solitary place, where he passed his time in prayer, to be summoned to Cordova. and appointed his brother Abderahman to the government

of Seville. Suleiman confirmed in his office as Cadi of Cebta that illustrious Jusuf Ben Hamud El Sadfi, so much renowned for his genius and erudition. Jusuf Ben Hamud was a native of Cebta, and in a garden which he cultivated with his own hands he is said to have had every kind of plant then known, with many which had never then been produced by any but himself.

To the Hagib Almanzor Abu Mozni Zawi Ben Zeiri Ben Menad of Sanhaga, Suleiman gave the government of Garnata, and rewarded the services of the general Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Said, known as Araub, by conferring on him that of Santamaria of Algarve, which Santamaria is a port of Ocsonoba on the coast of the Western Ocean;—at a word, King Suleiman bestowed rewards on all his followers; and to many of them he gave possessions and offices which they were empowered to transmit by right of inheritance to their sons,* the king demanding only that the nobles thus endowed should do homage for the towns they held, should promise fidelity and obedience to his dynasty, and should repair to his aid with their forces when called on to do so.

Six Cabilas or tribes of Africans received allotments of territory as above described, and these were raised by the chiefs of those tribes into independent sovereignties, as we shall see hereafter.

In the year 404 Aslao Ben Razin rebuilt and peopled the fortress and town of Santamaria in the east, which, from his name, was thenceforth called Santamaria de Aben Razin.

Among the unhappy chances of this period was that which befel the wise and learned man Raxid Ben Ibrahim of Cordova, who dwelt on the great square, and belonged to the mosque of Lait. Endeavouring to escape from the barbarians who were plundering the city, Raxid Ben Ibrahim departed from Cordova during the sack, and took his way

* These concessions of governments to be held in perpetuity, by diminishing the power of the sovereignty as they did, were the first cause of the division, decadence, and ultimate ruin of the country;—but the custom prevailed at that time throughout Europe, as our readers will remember.—*Condé.*

towards the north, but was overtaken on the road, and put to death with circumstances of indescribable atrocity.

The Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri lay, meanwhile, concealed in the capital until he had been cured of his wounds, when he secretly went forth and reached Auriola, without having encountered the enemies who were seeking him. There he found shelter among his friends and partizans, by whom he was enabled not only to attain his own city of Almeria, but also to take with him a considerable force of troops, with some treasure. The Wali who had been appointed in his place, even Alafia Ben Ahmed, resisted the entrance of Hairan, and defended himself in his Alcazar during twenty days; but the palace was taken by force, and the unhappy general was thrown into the sea, with all his children.

In the year 405, Hairan passed from Almeria to Ceuta, where Aly Ben Hamud was governor, and that noble he persuaded to take part with him in seeking vengeance for the deposition and suspected death of the King Hixem Ben Alhakem. The proposals of Hairan were to the effect that Aly should assemble his forces, which he should unite with those of Hairan and of his own brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, lord of Algezira Alhadra, by whose aid and that of other Alameries, Governors, and Alcaides of fortresses in the south of Spain, they might hope to drive Suleiman Ben Alhakem from Cordova, seeing that he was reigning there not with the consent of the Andalusians, but against their wish.

Hairan spoke with much warmth concerning the wrongs of the unhappy King Hixem Ben Alhakem, quoting the letters which Hixem had caused to be written to Aly Ben Hamud and his brother Alcasim, calling them to his aid, and offering them the succession to the throne, of all which Hairan could speak with effect, as being one who had intimate knowledge of everything connected with the matter. Furthermore, and as if the unfortunate Hixem had been still living—although it is more than probable that he had then ceased either to hope or fear—Hairan described the indignities of his imprisonment and the constant danger to which he was exposed while permitted to remain in

the hands of so cruel an enemy as was Suleiman Ben Alhakem. In the name of his sovereign, therefore, he entreated Aly Ben Hamud not to lose a moment, but at once to attempt his deliverance, adding, that even though they might not arrive in time to effect the saving of his life, they should in any case be ready to avenge the obscure and unmerited death which his enemies had inflicted on him, and which it more particularly belonged to them to do, as being descendants of the same illustrious race with the hapless king.

Incited by the words of Hairan, and by his gratitude to King Hixem, the noble general Aly Ben Hamud, who was of his nature a most compassionate and generous youth, determined to bestir himself in behalf of the deposed monarch, and if he were not permitted to deliver him from the foes into whose hands he had fallen, yet to avenge his innocent blood: he therefore united himself with Hairan, and, conjointly with that general, he wrote letters to his brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, exhorting him to assemble his forces for the purpose of uniting with the Alameries of Andalusia in their attempt to deliver or avenge the oppressed King Hixem Ben Alhakem.

Furnished with these letters, Hairan then departed from Cebta, and sailed for Algezira Alhadra, where he was presented on his disembarkation with a copy of very elegant verses by the renowned poet Abu Amer Ben Deragh, to whom Hairan made the royal gift of one hundred and fifty mitcals of gold for the same.

On the part of Alcasim Ben Hamud the Sclavonian general found no difficulty,—on the contrary, that Ameer entered into the alliance proposed to him with all his heart, assembled the flower of his troops, and being joined by those of his brother Aly, which arrived from Cebta and Tangiers, he took possession of Medina Malaga in concert with the Sclavonian Hairan, although the Alcaide of that city, Amer Ben Feth, did his utmost to oppose their enterprise.

The purpose of these allies was now made public: they declared their determination to restore their legitimate sovereign Hixem Ben Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir to the throne of Spain, and called on all good Moslemah

to bear part in that undertaking. The Alameries agreed to place themselves entirely under the guidance of the illustrious Aly Ben Hamud, whom they elected the leader of all, and so they joined their banners, in the hope of a successful war.

All the towns of the empire were now thrown into commotion, and the report of this important enterprise was presently sounding throughout broad Spain.

About this time a company of the citizens of Alisbona, in number about eighty men, and all friends among themselves, being of one tribe, embarked to seek new lands in the midst of the Atlantic Ocean, but they found it impossible to get beyond certain islands, where they were attacked by an uncountable number of hawks; nay, by the violence of those birds, they were prevented from passing the said islands; wherefore they returned to their city, relating marvellous things of the voyage they had made.* These men were thenceforward called the Emprendadores or adventurers, and gave name to that part of Alisbona in which they dwelt, seeing that it was thenceforward called the Calle or Street of the Almogawares.

Now Xerif Edris relates the matter above alluded to as follows:—He tells us that the Almogawares departed in ships from Medina Alisbona, embarking on the great ocean from the desire they had to know what might be found therein; and he repeats what has been said above, to wit that the part of Alisbona near Alhama Darab, being that wherein these adventurous mariners dwelt, received its name from them and retained it from that time,—nay, still bears the same even to these latter days. He then proceeds to relate that they were originally eight men, the sons of eight brothers, and consequently cousins, who took on their own charges a ship of good burthen, and placing in it water and provisions sufficient for the consumption of several months, they then resigned themselves to the waves with the first breathings of the east wind.

* In this relation, and that which follows, the Translator has been careful to preserve in all its simplicity the account given by these early Arabic authors (some writing about 980 of our era) of the maritime enterprise thus early undertaken by the Portuguese.

When they had navigated about eleven days, they came to a portion of the sea where there were heavy currents, with thick and troubled waters of a dark colour. There these mariners were seized with fear, and turning their sails to the other side, they steered for twelve days in a southerly direction until they came to an island which they named the Isle of Flocks,—and it was so called by them on account of the herds of cattle, numerous beyond counting, which they found on that island, such flocks being without shepherds or any other men to give them tendance.

Having reached this island and disembarked thereon, they first discovered a fountain of pure running water, with a wild fig-tree growing over it. Pausing here, they took of those flocks, and, dividing the meat, made ready to eat thereof, seathing and roasting the same at their pleasure; but the taste was so bitter, that no man could endure to retain it in his mouth,—wherefore they did but keep the skins of these animals, and, departing from the island, continued their course, still with a southerly wind, and for yet twelve days.

They then discovered another island, on which they might perceive habitations of men and many fields under culture of the plough. They steered towards the place, proposing to ascertain the extent of it, and what might be found therein, but had not proceeded far before they were met by numerous Zawarkas or barks strongly manned, and by these their ship was taken, they being at the same time made captive, and conducted to a city which was situated on the coast of the sea.

Having been landed, they perceived that the men were somewhat red of hue and tall of stature, with long hair, of which, however, they had but little; their women these mariners judged to possess great beauty, insomuch that they were in amaze thereat.

The inhabitants of the city kept their prisoners shut up during three days, at the end of which time there came a man who could speak their tongue, and he enquired who they were, to what end they had come thither, and where the country of their abode was situate. They then related to him all that has been told above, and he pro-

mised them security for their lives, with a fortunate issue to their enterprise.

On the second day from that of this man's visit, they were presented to the king of the island, who asked them questions similar to those which had previously been put by the interpreter, when they replied that they had set forth on the great sea incited by the wish to discover such wonderful things as might be contained therein, and with the intention of proceeding to the extremities of the same.

When the king heard that, he smiled, and commanded the interpreter to tell those merchants that the late king his father had sent certain of his vassals to examine the great sea, as they were proposing to do, but that even after those men had navigated through the wide extent thereof during many months, they could come to no end, and even found that the light was failing them,—wherefore they had been compelled to return without having made any profit of their voyage. The king then bade his interpreter to offer the voyagers assurance of security on his part, and give them good hope for the future.

They were then taken back to their prison, where they remained until the west wind blew, when the people of the country put them into Zawarkas, bound their eyes so that they could not see the direction in which they were proceeding, and navigated with them in that condition during many days.

"Thus voyaging in the company of those men all these days, with their nights," relate the mariners, "we came at length to a strand, on which they disembarked us all, and having tied our hands behind our backs, they left us thus on the shore. We remained there in much anxiety, being, moreover, greatly oppressed by our bonds, until the day-break (which followed soon after we had been thus abandoned) was succeeded by the rising of the sun, when we heard a sound resembling that of human voices. We then all cried aloud with one consent, and the noise we thus made having been a very loud one, certain men who chanced to be within hearing of that place were made aware of our presence, and came towards the spot whence our cries had

proceeded. Finding us in that unhappy plight they then freed us from our ligaments, and asked us of our state. To all which we made answer in their tongue, for these men were men of Barbary. One of them then enquired of us, "Do you know how far your land is from ours?" and we replied that we did not; whereupon he said, "Then between your land and ours there is the voyage of two months." The leader of these men then exclaimed, "Wasafi!" which is as much as to say, what a misfortune: wherefore from that time this shore was called by us Asafi. It is a port or landing-place on the sea at the extremity of Magreb."

So much do we find related in respect to that navigation on the great sea. We now return to the affairs of Suleiman Ben Alhakem. When the reports of what was doing on the coast reached Cordova, they did not fail to cause him heavy cares: he wrote to his generals, and sent envoys to his allies. Some have affirmed that he then put to death the deposed King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah, suspecting him of being the prime mover in those troubles; but God alone knows the truth of that matter; all that can with certainty be averred is, that nothing more was ever heard of King Hixem after the third entry of Suleiman Ben Alhakem into Cordova.

Not desiring to await his enemies in the capital, Suleiman's first orders were for the assembling of his cavalry, and with that force he left the city, remitting the government thereof to his father Alhakem Ben Abderahman, although the old man was very reluctant to accept the charge, and more than once refused to undertake it.

The general Hairan El Alameri had meanwhile repaired to Almunecaub with the troops which he had gathered from Almeria, and was there joined by Aly Ben Hamud, with those of Cebta and Tangiers; the people of Malaga and Algezira, with those of their Comarcas, also proceeding to the same point of union, seeing that Almunecaub is at equal distance from Almeria and Malaga. Here, when the banners had all assembled, the leaders bound themselves by a vow to restore the dethroned monarch Hixem El Muyad Billah to the seat of his fathers, and to obey him, the son of their ancient lords, as the only true sovereign of Spain.

This was done with much solemnity in the presence of the congregated troops, because there was much distrust among them; and in discourse with each other, the soldiers freely declared that their generals were moving not for King Hixem, but for their own particular interest, and to avenge their private wrongs.

To the very confines of Almunecaub, where the army of Aly Ben Hamud and his allies were thus preparing for action, came Suleiman Ben Alhakem with a flying camp of carefully selected cavalry, when several skirmishes ensued between the advanced parties of either army, both sides fighting with much bravery and various fortunes.

It was the desire of Suleiman Ben Alhakem to avoid a general engagement, and he took much pains to do so, unwilling to encounter the large force of the allies in a pitched battle; he hoped, indeed, that the delays thus ensuing would diminish the fervour by which they were animated, and trusted to time for the breaking-up of their union, seeing that such dissolution is the most frequent result of alliances thus formed.

But the wise and experienced Hairan dividing his purpose, was equally anxious to bring him to battle; and Aly Ben Hamud, prudently accepting the advice of his older ally, did his best to produce that result; wherefore they did at length find means, though not without great difficulty and many stratagems, to compel their adversary to open fight—power against power,—when a sanguinary combat ensued, with incalculable loss to both armies. This took place towards the close of the year 406.

About this time, the Wali of Denia, Mugehid Edim Ben Abdallah Alameri, known as Abu Geix El Muafek, a crafty, yet very brave and enterprising man, who had been much in the confidence of the Hagib Abderahman, the son of Almanzor, finding the state of things in Spain thus disturbed, prepared a large and well-appointed fleet, with which he set sail for the islands of Yebizas* and Mayorca, well furnished with troops, part of which were his own, but which he had in part taken into his pay from other banners.

* Iviça.

Mugehid Edim then succeeded in obtaining possession of the islands, which he fortified strongly and effectually, and secured his hold thereon.

Now, in departing from his government of Denia, Mugehid Edim had appointed a substitute to himself and a leader of his people in Abdallah Ben Obeidala Ben El Walid Ben Jusuf Ben Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz Ben Amru Ben Otman Ben Muhamad Ben Chalid Ben Ocba Ben Abi Moati Ben Aban Ben Anmir Ben Omeya Ben Abdxemsi, known as El Moati of Cordova, a man of the most illustrious nobility, of distinguished learning, and possessing a good genius. He had been a disciple of Muhamad El Begi and other sages; and being thus appointed governor of Denia, the people of eastern Spain revering him for his excellencies and honouring the nobility of his race, not only obeyed the command of Mugehid Edim in paying to his orders the respect due to those of Mugehid himself, but finally placed themselves under his exclusive allegiance, making the Chotba for him in all the Alminbares; nay, Abdallah Ben Obeidala, thus encouraged, assumed all the insignia of sovereignty, and struck coins with his own impress. The elevation and reign of this Moati, with other events of similar character, might almost cause a doubt whether the affairs of men be ruled by destiny and immutable necessity, or be not rather left to chance and suffered to revolve without a providence, which last is not credible. God alone is able to answer this question.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayau relates that the wise Muhamad El Begi one day said to this Moati, who was his disciple, "Do not give way to thy passions, Oh Coreixi, and let not the temptations of command and the glitter of mundane vanities bewilder or dazzle thy judgment: accept not the charges of empire, if such should be offered thee. May Allah preserve thy life from the troubles that these bring with them."

Remaining thoughtful for some time, and as if displeased by what his master had said to him, El Moati enquired, "Wherefore dost thou speak to me thus, and whence dost thou know that I require this exhortation? Yet since thou hast begun, I adjure thee to inform me

clearly, and say all thy purpose, as God shall prosper thee."

To this Muhamad replied, "Yea, with perfect clearness and in a good hour, according to the Divine will, shalt thou hear all my thoughts. I was in a dream, and I saw thee therein, for behold there was a blooming and very vigorous vine, around which rose a bright flaming fire, which burnt around it for a long time without doing the noble tree any wrong, but eventually consumed it, and the vine became dust and ashes.

"This fire is the civil discord which is even now kindling around us, and cannot fail to rise into flames; the blooming vine is thyself; but the end of things is known to God alone."

To these words El Moati made answer and said, "God deliver us from such evils as these that thou hast foreshadowed."

But some forty years afterwards, Time having passed on his way, the course of events fully justified the explanation which Muhamad El Begi had given to his dream.

In the year 407, Mugehid Edim departed from Mayorca and repaired in his ships to the great island of the Christians, called Sardinia, taking in his company the African Thabit El Guageni, a wise astrologer, and having landed in that island he took the greater portion of it by force of arms, making himself master of nearly all the fortresses thereof.

In the year 407, the war between Suleiman and the allied forces of Hairan, Aly, and Alcasim, was continued with various fortunes, the towns and populations meanwhile suffering cruelly from their incursions and the excesses of the soldiery, insomuch that all were living in fear and disquietude.

Suleiman was anxious to obtain an increase of his army from Cordova and its Comarcas; but the few troops sent him served without zeal or good will of any kind, whole companies of them going over to the enemy before his eyes. His former allies from the frontier of eastern Spain excused themselves with various pretexts, and none came to his aid. All the host of Suleiman Ben Alhakem was thus formed of

Africans and the cavalry of Merida, Carmona, Ecija, and Seville, with the people of Algarve, these forces being led by his brother Abderahman, by Abu Giafar, Wali of Santamaria, and by the Wali of Merida, Abu Othman Said Ben Haraum. The enemies of Suleiman did not neglect to foment and encourage the disobedience and discontent prevailing in the various provinces, and sought to do him injury in every manner that they could devise.

And now, after many skirmishes and combats of comparatively slight importance, the two hosts met in the Comarca of Medina Talca, which is in the territory of Seville, when, as of one accord, they commenced a furious battle. The Africans fought with a barbarous valour, enforced by the example of their intrepid leaders, and above all by that of their king, Suleiman Ben Alhakem, who went raging like a maddened lion through the hottest of the fight. But yielding at length to the superiority of numbers, he began to retire as the day drew near its close, withdrawing his troops in good order, and proposing to reach the fortress, there to take shelter for the night, when he was suddenly attacked by the greater portion of his own men. The soldiers had been induced to that mutiny by the shameless treason of their Andalusian officers, who followed the breath of fortune: and that inconstant one, according to her usual practice, had that day abandoned Suleiman Ben Alhakem for ever. Thus the two brothers, their horses lying dead beneath them, and themselves covered with wounds, were surrounded by the boldest of their enemies, and fell almost expiring into their hands. At that time there lay by the side of Suleiman, bravely fighting for whom they had sacrificed their lives, his faithful vizier, Ahmed Ben Said, lord of Santamaria, in Algarve, with his son-in-law, Said Ben Haraun of Merida; other cavaliers of Algarve, who had also kept their faith to their lord, very narrowly escaping the same fate. The field remained concealed beneath the corpses of the slain for a vast distance

On the following day, the victors entered Seville without any resistance, and continuing their march from that city, they took possession of Cordova with equal facility. The old man Alhakem Ben Abderahman, being made acquainted

by the fugitive Africans with the misfortunes of his sons, had no wish to restrain the triumphant course of Aly Ben Hamud, the avenger, nor any power to do so, even had he felt the wish.

No sooner had the allies entered Cordova, than Aly Ben Hamud made himself master of the Alcazar, took the Wali Alhakem Ben Abderahman prisoner, and commanded that his two sons Suleiman and Abderahman should be brought to his presence, although they were then dying of the many and grave wounds they had received in the battle. Aly then enquired of the noble old chief, and said, "Oh, man of many days, what hast thou done with the King Hixem, and whither hast thou borne him?" Whereunto the old man answered that he knew nothing of the matter. Then said Aly, "Ye have put him to death." But Alhakem replied, "No, by Allah, that have we not; nor do we know whether he be living or dead, or where he now is." Thereupon Aly drew his sword, and said, "These heads do I offer to the vengeance of Hixem El Muyad Billah, and so do I fulfil my charge." Then Suleiman raised his eyes and said, "Let thy sword fall on mine alone, Aly Ben Hamud, for these my father and brother have done nothing to offend any man, or to merit death." But Aly disregarded his words, and with his own hand he beheaded them all three, removing each head by one firm and well-directed blow. The death of Suleiman, of Alhakem his father, and of his brother Abderahman, took place on a Sunday, the 20th of the moon of Moharram, in the year of the Hegira 407.

Aly now commanded that King Hixem should be sought with great care: and there was no apartment and no dungeon of the royal palaces and dwellings wherein he did not cause search to be made; but all this was only vain labour.—Hixem El Muyad Billah never appeared again either in life or as the dead, and his departure from this world was at length made public, giving occasion for the setting about among the people of many strange fables and groundless rumours.

CHAP. CX.—Of the reign of Aly ben Hamud.

By the counsels of Hairan Alameri the Sclavonian, Aly Ben Hamud was now proclaimed in Cordova as King of Spain, with the titles of Motuakil Billah* and of Anasir Ledinallah,† that proclamation being made on the 13th day of Giumada Segunda, in the year 408.‡ The Chotba or public prayer was then made for their new sovereign in all the mosques; and Aly wrote to the Walies and Governors of provinces, making known to them that King Hixem El Muyad Billah had declared him successor to the throne before losing his liberty, and expressing his hope that they would come to his capital, as loyal subjects should do, to take the oath of fidelity and allegiance to his rule.

From the Walies of Seville, Toledo, Merida, and Saragossa, Aly Ben Hamud received no replies to his letters; a circumstance which caused the king to conceive much fear and distrust, more especially of the Alameries. The Sclavonian Hairan, moreover, made many extravagant demands on him, and appeared to believe that he was failing in the fulfilment of the conditions agreed on between them; wherefore, fearing that general's influence in Cordova, the King Aly Ben Hamud dismissed him from the Court, and commanded him to repair to his government of Almeria: but Hairan departed in great displeasure, offended by that proceeding on the part of Aly Ben Hamud, and meditating revenge against the proud and ungrateful king.

Moved by these feelings, the Sclavonian general incited other leaders to rebellion as he passed onwards to his government; and many of the Alameries joining his party, Hairan entered into a conspiracy against Aly Ben Hamud, with the Alcaides of Arjona, Jaen, and Baeza, in conjunction with whom he wrote to Almondar, the Wali of Saragossa, exhorting him to unite with them for the purpose of driving Aly from the throne and restoring the same to the Omeyas, who were in fact the lawful heirs, and to whom

* Motuakil Billah—Confiding in God.
† Anasir Ledinallah, or Ledin Allah—Defender of the Law of God.
‡ A.D. 1018.

Aly Ben Hamud, in his treaty with the allied leaders, had promised the restitution of their just claims.

And now, to give their enterprise the more weight, and secure the consideration of the people, the Walies assembled in Guadix, where they took a solemn oath to maintain with all their power the war by which a legitimate prince of the house of Omeya, to whom all might pay a rightful obedience, should be placed on the throne of Cordova.

Such were the purposes which they publicly declared; but the stipulations secretly made and agreed to among them were of a less generous character: they were in fact more eagerly seeking their private interests than the general welfare, aiming at nothing less than the permanence and security of their governments and offices, each hoping to secure that which he held in his own family, and proposing to obtain their cities or provinces as the hereditary possession of their houses, in reward for the zeal they were displaying and the labours they were about to undertake.

With the plausible pretext set forth as above mentioned, the Walies assembled a large host, the natural love of the people for their ancient sovereigns causing all to hope that they might recover their previous calm and prosperity under the shadow and within the protection of their Omeyan princes.

Mulgehid Edim had meanwhile remained in possession of that large portion of the island of Sardinia which he had conquered; but he now found that his people were becoming weary of the war, of the unhealthy climate, and of the long absence they had endured from their beloved country. He perceived also that the popular voice, which had previously applauded him, was beginning to change; his followers were even heard to murmur at his ambition and covetousness, many of them saying, "This Ameer is not content with the riches and fertility of his own states, which are among the most delightful regions of Spain, and with the Yebisat Islands, but he must needs cross the sea, affronting all the great perils and perpetual changes of the inconstant waters for the purpose of making new acquisitions: but of all this what profit does there accrue to us, who follow his banners with so much labour and endanger our lives for

the furtherance of his rash and ambitious enterprises? What is our reward? To be the sport of death and the food of voracious beasts of prey.

These complaints of the discontented, which daily increased, did not fail to reach the ears of Mugehid; and their frequent repetition, with the arrival of the Christians, who came in large numbers with a well-appointed fleet, determined that leader to desist from his undertaking wherefore, gathering together the riches, captives, and flocks which he had taken, he gave orders that all should be embarked for his return home.

ut for that purpose he chose a haven very badly adapted to his intent, acting in this matter against the advice of Abu Charaub, the captain of his ships. The latter, moreover, assured him, as we are informed by Abu Feth El Thabit, who was present, that a great storm was threatening, and that it would be better to wait and offer battle to the Christians on land, than brave the fury of the tempestuous ocean; but the Ameer would not listen to his counsels, and all embarked as he had commanded.

Then did God call forth immediately a most fearful tempest of impetuous and contrary winds; waves rose up that were like mountains, the ships climbed at one moment as to the clouds, and were lost at the next in the abysses of the sea, which were seen foaming and of horrible aspect, but only by the terrible and fugitive lightnings, seeing that all heaven was veiled in darkness, while these were accompanied by frightful peals of thunder, and they, joining the perpetual roar of the raging sea, caused all hearts to tremble, when the dazzled eyes of the discouraged people could see nought before them but fearful images of death.

All the labours and pains of the mariners could not prevent the ships from dashing against each other. Abu Charoub called out to them, commanding that the barks should be kept off the coast, where many of them were suffering wreck upon the rocks, while others were swallowed by the waves; but all his efforts were vain.

The Christians were meanwhile contentedly watching the destruction of their enemies from the shore; and as the poor shipwrecked creatures were cast forth to land, they

took them and put all to the edge of the sword: he, therefore, who might have saved himself from the cruel waves of the ocean, fell into their atrocious hands, and was at once deprived of life.

All these horrors and cruelties were beheld by the Ameer Mugehid Edim; unable to remedy the evil, he wept in his rage and despair,—now threatening with stern gestures, and now calling aloud with a lamentable voice; but all equally in vain, seeing that not for this did the winds cease to blow or the tempest to rave; nor could the inhuman thirst of the Christians for blood be made to feel satiated by his outcries.

Seized with a just indignation, Abu Charoub exclaimed to him, "Yea, weep! for this misfortune hath been sent by God that thou mayst lament thine ill-advised resolve, by which so many men are sacrificed."

The tempest at length subsided, and having gathered the remains of his shattered fleet, the Ameer returned to the Yebisat Islands, where he reposed himself from his toils, and sought to repair the heavy losses he had suffered in that great calamity.

The banners of the Walies united against Aly Ben Hamud were now approaching Cordova, led by the Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri: but their arrival was no sooner made known to King Aly, than he sallied forth to meet and attack them with his Africans and the people he had assembled from Malaga and Algezira-Alhadra. This the allied forces had not expected, believing the king would be intimidated by their approach, and permit himself to be shut up in the capital: they were therefore taken at disadvantage, and the cavalry of Aly fell upon them with such impetuosity as to throw them into a disorderly flight. A frightful slaughter was then made by the troops of Aly among the foot-soldiers of his assailants; and those generals, each accusing the other of the misfortune they had sustained, broke up their alliance, and separated in discontent. King Aly then charged his Wali Gilfeya, who was an experienced general, to pursue the fugitives, commanding him to make a cruel war on the Sclavonian Hairan El Alameri in particular; whereupon that captain passed through the districts which

were supposed to be more particularly favourable to the Alameries, and besieged several strong towns which held for that party.

Hairan, for his part, had meanwhile retired to the territory of Jaen, and assembling the banners of the towns in that region, he formed a league with them, when they agreed to proclaim the Wali of Jaen, who was an illustrious cavalier of the house of Omeya, the lawful king of Spain. This was Abderahman Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelmelic Ben Abderahman Anasir, called Almortadi and Abul Motaraf, a virtuous man, who possessed vast riches, was of a liberal as well as upright mind, and had secured the love of all that land by the excellencies of his character. The name alone of that cavalier, who was the great-grandson of Abderahman the Great, lent a powerful impulse to the party of the Alameries. The towns and people of those mountain regions proclaimed him their king and lord with acclamations of gladness: and Hairan the Sclavonian, with all the Alcaides and Alameries then present, took the oath of fidelity and obedience to his rule: the only person who excused himself, under various suppositions and pretences, was El Sanhagi, Wali of Granada and Elvira.

CHAP. CXI.—Of Abderahman Almortadi.

The Proclamation of Abderahman, the fifth of that name in the house of the Omeyas of Spain, with the oath of allegiance taken by his people, was celebrated in the city of Jaen with much solemnity and with many demonstrations of public gladness. Abderahman appointed the Sclavonian Hairan to be Hagib of his house and state, when the latter convoked the Walies of the cities in his master's name, causing them to assemble troops, with which he marched against the forces of King Aly Ben Hamud.

The two hosts met near Baza, and an obstinate battle ensued, when the army led by Gilfeya conquered, and Hairan Alameri was compelled to retire. He then withdrew

from fortress to fortress, being under the necessity of sustaining a skirmishing fight at every movement.

In one of these combats the Sclavonian general was severely wounded, and his cavaliers being dispersed, he was fain to conceal himself in a remote quarter of Baza, when his soldiers, believing him to be dead or a prisoner, returned to Jaen much discouraged and very sad at the loss of their leader. But after the lapse of a few days, the Sclavonian found means to inform King Abderahman and his cavaliers of his safety; and this intelligence caused them to rejoice greatly, since they had already given him up for lost. The king sent a body of troops to serve as his guard, and these being joined by others from his own city of Almeria, they bore him to that place almost as it were in triumph. He was then immediately surrounded by a great concourse of Sclavonians and Alameries, the Alcaides of Denia, Tadmir, and Jativa, also repairing to Almeria, each with his respective banners.

Through the whole extent of eastern Spain the Chotba had now been made for the King Abderahman Almortadi, and all the people of those districts prepared to restore the house of Omeya to the throne of Cordova, being resolved to drive thence the usurper Aly Ben Hamud. The fame of this resolve, and the proclamation of Abderahman, were soon carried through all the provinces of the realm, when the people declared for him in every part. Valencia, Tortosa, Tarragona, and Saragossa, all proclaimed themselves of his party, and the Walies of those provinces sent in their letters of allegiance.

This caused much anxiety to the King Aly Ben Hamud, and he despatched his most carefully selected cavalry to his general Saib of Sanhaga, whom he had appointed Wali of Granada and Elvira, commanding him to press on the war against King Abderahman and his partizans with the utmost constancy. There were, indeed, many who gave their wishes to that king, but they did not all proceed with equal zeal and courage: thus the number who gathered round his banners was not large, and the principal part of his strength was in the number of his cities.

Gilfeya and the Wali of Granada and Elvira were meanwhile infesting the territories and Comarcas of Jaen, in

fulfillment of the commands of their lord, while King Abderahman, with his followers, secured themselves in the mountain region of the Alpujarras, and in the strong position of Jaen itself, the city and fortress, that is to say. King Aly Ben Hamud marched in person, with a powerful army, against the Sclavonian Hairan, whom he attacked and besieged in Almeria. After a stubborn resistance he took that city by storm. Hairan fell pierced by many lances as he fought in defence of the place, and so grievously wounded as to be almost dead, was borne to the presence of the conqueror, the Alcazar having surrendered on conditions, and because its defenders were acting in the conviction that their leader had already expired. Almost senseless from loss of blood, the Sclavonian was placed before Ben Hamud, when the latter, forgetting the good service he had formerly received at the hands of the vanquished general, cut off the head of him who had but a few moments to breathe, with his own sword. Then, having taken measures for securing the city of Almeria, Aly returned to Cordova, content with his triumph, and believing that all the discords of the country would soon be at an end, since the restless and rebellious Hairan was at length dead.

In this year of 408, and on Tuesday, the 9th of the moon Xaban, there died at Cordova, which was his native place, the Cadi of Ecija, Suleiman Ben Chalaf, called Aben Gamron. He lived in the Chandac of the Aragegila suburb, and prayed in the mosque of Almonthir: his remains were buried with great pomp in the Macbora or cemetery of Om Salema, and the prayer was made for him by the Cadi Junor Ben Abdallah.

Even in the city of Cordova, and in his own Alcazar, King Aly Ben Hamud had many enemies, all of whom were more or less zealous partizans of the King Abderahman Almortadi. The same might be said of Seville, and through all Spain the nobles were for the most part on the side of Abderahman. Yet was Aly Ben Hamud not discouraged, but was constantly employed in preparing himself for the continuance of the struggle; and having despatched a large part of his forces to join the generals Gilfeya and El Sanhagi, in the district of Granada, he was now himself on

the point of setting forth to join them, in the hope of putting an end to the war. It was the intention of Aly to attack the city of Jaen, where King Abderahman made his residence, with all his forces, and everything was made ready for that purpose; the baggage train and guards of the king had even passed the gates of the city, and halted only to wait for his arrival; when, before leaving Cordova, King Aly entered his apartments to take a bath. There, the Sclavonians who attended him having been won to their cause, as is supposed, by the Alameries then in Cordova, seized the unfortunate Aly, and wickedly drowned their lord while thus helpless in their hands.

Such was the unhappy end of the King Aly Ben Hamud. His death took place in the moon of Dylcada, of the year 408.

Aly Ben Hamud was in the 45th year of his age when he thus died; he was tall of stature, and of handsome person; his eyes were black, he was slight and spare of figure, and a man of severe and virtuous life, but very cruel to his enemies. He was King of Cordova one year and nine months. His death was publicly reported to be an accident or natural misfortune, and so did his guards and more trustworthy servants believe it to be. God alone knows all things.

CHAP. CXII.—Of Alcasim Ben Hamud, brother of Aly.

The Generals of King Aly's guards, and all the followers of that prince, proclaimed his brother Alcasim Ben Hamud, Lord of Algezira Alhadra, as King of Spain; and this they did in Cordova with one accord, going through all the streets to make public his inauguration, and calling him El Manun. The event of his brother's death was made known to Alcasim with incredible rapidity, and he hastened to the capital followed by a force of four thousand horsemen, insomuch that his enemies had not time to impede his entrance or excite any movement against him; wherefore many of the nobles of Cordova saw themselves compelled

to swear allegiance to him and became his followers in their own despite.

One of the earliest cares of Alcasim was to command a rigid investigation to be made into the cause of his brother's death. The Sclavonians who had served him in his bath were subjected to unheard-of tortures, and in the midst of these they confessed that they had murdered the king to satisfy the vengeance of certain among the Alameries and others, whom the cruelties of Aly Ben Hamud had made his enemies.

And now, although these Sclavonians did not name any particular person, yet Alcasim Ben Hamud caused many of the nobles to be put to death without any other proof of guilt than the presumption that they were his brother's enemies, arising from the fact that he had punished or put to death other nobles who were their kinsmen.

All men now feared Alcasim, and trembled in his presence, the principal families of the city being those most heavily oppressed. Many cavaliers fled the capital, and passed over to King Abderahman Almortadi, insomuch that the vengeance taken by Alcasim Ben Hamud enriched the party of his rival by the addition of many powerful nobles to his banners. The reports of certain victories gained by the people of Jaen over the Wali of Granada also came at this time to increase the hopes of those who were attached to the family of Omeya, while they augmented the fears and distrust of the followers of the Hamudes in equal proportion.

When the news of Aly Ben Hamud's death reached Cebta, his son Yahye passed instantly into Spain with such forces as he could collect on the spur of the moment, leaving orders that numerous bands of cavalry should follow him to support what he called his rights; Yahye Ben Aly pretending that the succession to the throne of Spain belonged to him. Now that prince formed a large part of his army from cavalry of the Negros of Sûs, a ferocious people long inured to war; and this body of barbarian youth had departed from Africa, swearing to crown their leader in Cordova, or to die fighting in his cause. With these troops came many valiant Moorish and Alara-

bian generals, who promised Yahye Ben Aly the victory over his enemies with infinite confidence.

The known bravery of his nephew Yahye, the superior justice of his pretensions, and the large body of cavalry and men of Barbary, which he was persuaded that youth could command, gave Alcasim Ben Hamud much cause to fear. Assembling his troops, nevertheless, he departed from Cordova with the resolve to oppose that force, and proceeded towards Malaga. But when he approached the city, Aly was informed that his nephew had already obtained possession of the same. Nor were the negroes idle on their part: made aware of Alcasim's approach, they sallied forth to meet him, when several battles were fought with equal bravery on both sides, and nearly equal fortune. But at this time Alcasim received fatal intelligence from his people in the Alpujarras, who were daily suffering defeats at the hands of King Abderahman's generals; whereupon the uncle and nephew, seeing that while they were mutually destroying each other, they were rendering the enterprises of their enemies more easy and effectual, agreed to enter into a convention, with the hope of securing the sovereignty in their family, and for the more successful opposition of the rival to their house. It was thus decided, but not without a certain degree of falsehood and evil purpose on both sides, that Yahye Ben Aly should have a share in the government of the kingdom, and should even occupy the city of Cordova, while his uncle Alcasim, with the people of Seville, Algezira, and Malaga, reinforced by a part of Yahye Ben Aly's Cavalry, should carry on the war against King Abderahman Almortadi; it was furthermore agreed that at the termination of the struggle the two kinsmen should rule the realm of Spain conjointly, with a just and equitable government, dividing the power amicably between them.

These conditions were concluded in the year 412; whereupon, having just sent a portion of his troops to El Sanhagi and the Wali of Granada, in the hope of enabling them to maintain themselves against Abderahman Almortadi, Alcasim Ben Hamud proceeded to Malaga, whither he had sent the corpse of his brother Aly, with the intention of causing it to be shipped thence to Cebta, where he pro-

posed to have it buried. All things being disposed for the fulfilment of that purpose, the body was embalmed, and being landed at Cebta, was there interred with great pomp, the sepulchre of Aly Ben Hamud being a beautiful mosque which he had himself erected on the Plaza or public square of the Lana.

CHAP. CXIII.—Of YAHYE BEN ALY.

While Alcasim was thus employed with the funeral solemnities of his brother Aly, in Cebta, his nephew Yahye had entered Cordova with his guard, composed of the Moors of Sûs. The people of the city, abhorring his uncle Alcasim, received him with demonstrations of gladness, calling him their lord and king; they gave him the title of El Moateli; and Yahye, allowing himself to be borne along on the current of popular favour, caused the oath of obedience and fidelity to his person to be taken without delay.

The Moors of his guard were much rejoiced at finding their promises thus easily fulfilled; and the new King Yahye Ben Aly declared that his uncle Alcasim Ben Hamud had no right whatever to the throne of Spain, nor could put forth any just claim to a portion in the government, save only that which he, as sovereign, might be pleased to impart. The Xeques, Viziers, and Alchatibes, who were present at this declaration, affirmed the justice of the same, and offered the young monarch their arms and services to maintain him in his state and sovereignty without condition or exception.

While all these things were passing in Cordova, the followers of King Abderahman Almortadi were continuing the war against Manzor of Sanhaga, who did not venture to descend from the mountains, restricting himself to unexpected incursions, which he made from the clefts and asperities of his strongholds in the rocks, when he poured his troops hastily over the Comarcas of Jaen, so far as Guadix or Baza, and withdrew them as hastily, after he had ravaged the district, to the no small suffering of the people.

But the partizans of Abderahman would fain have had him quit that mountain warfare, and advance with all his forces upon Cordova or Toledo, where they believed that he would unite all the banners of Spain under his own command: there were, nevertheless, many among the Alameries who desired that the king should rather finish in the first instance with Gilfeya and Manzor of Sanhaga, who were cruelly devastating their country. Abderahman was on his part very anxious to march on Cordova or Toledo; but, not wishing to displease any of his followers, he first laboured to compel Manzor and Gilfeya to a pitched battle. He divided his forces into three parts, maintaining the Vegas or level plains of the Xenil with two of them, and despatching the third, which was composed of the troops of Jaen and Somontan, with directions to seek and bring to battle the general Gilfeya and the lord of Sanhaga.

Alcasim Ben Hamud had meanwhile returned to Malaga, and being made acquainted with the perfidy of his nephew, he wrote to his generals Gilfeya and Manzor, commanding them to abandon that war of Jaen, if it appeared likely to detain them much longer, and direct their forces on Cordova, there to assist him in compelling his nephew Yahye to the fulfilment of the conditions which he had offered to the brother of his father. Alcasim Ben Hamud then assembled his own cavalry, with the people of Malaga and Algezira Alhadra, accompanied by whom he proceeded towards Cordova.

When the approach of Alcasim was made known to his nephew, Yahye Ben Aly determined to leave the city, seeing that to the powerful army brought against him he could only oppose the force of his brave Moorish guard, and even of that body a certain portion had been sent to the Alpurjarras: he therefore considered it more prudent to avoid than to dare the combat, and departed from Cordova accordingly, taking unfrequented roads. Yahye then continued his march until he reached Algezira Alhadra, where he arrived at the close of the moon Dylcada, in the year 413. Having fortified himself in that city as he best might, he sent to Africa for a reinforcement of troops, and determined to wait the event.

Alcasim then made his entry into Cordova without having met with the slightest resistance; but none of the principal inhabitants went forth to receive him, and he was met only by some few of the populace;—a circumstance by which he was much displeased, and which clearly proved to him that the capital was not well-affected towards his authority. He at once commenced an enquiry, by which he learned the names of such principal men among the Sclavonians as were most zealous in the cause of his nephew, and ordered that certain of these, as well as others belonging to the palace, should be put to the torture; when, as the number he suspected was great, so the sufferings he inflicted were many as well as grievous. These cruelties caused Alcasim Ben Hamud to be more than ever abhorred; and the more important of the nobles, perceiving that he had sent the greater part of his troops to the aid of Gilfeya, as a man who thought he had no cause to fear, began to enter into a conspiracy against him. With all the secrecy required, and taking care to let no trace of their real purpose appear, they contrived to gain over large numbers of the people, among whom they expended vast sums of money, distributing arms also to such of the citizens as they permitted to partake to a certain extent of their confidence, but concealing their ultimate end from all.

Towards midnight, therefore,—that being the point of time which they had selected,—they made a sudden attack on the Alcazar, where the guards defended the place so bravely, that the confederates, after fighting all night, were still unable to make themselves masters of the palace; but they obtained possession of all the gates and forts of the city, which the revolted inhabitants at once occupied with the partizans of the conspiring nobles. They caused the Alcazar likewise to be closely surrounded by a large body of cross-bow men, so that none could enter or leave the palace but with their permission. That siege endured some fifty days, and the provisions of those within the Alcazar being exhausted, while they had no hope of succour from without, King Alcasim and his guards determined to sally forth against the armed multitude besieging the walls, within which they must otherwise perish by starvation. The hope of the King was, that by a sudden onslaught he might succeed in cutting a

path through the besiegers, and might eventually make his way out of the city.

This attempt he therefore made one morning at the dawn of day, and the sortie was effected with great impetuosity; but so bravely did the people repel their assailants, that very few succeeded in forcing their way, and of those few the individuals who passed beyond the courts of the Alcazar were for the most part cut down in the streets or at the city gates. Among the rest, Alcasim himself would without doubt have been dispatched, had he not been made known to certain of the more generous cavaliers, who saved his life by taking him into the house of the Vizier Abul Huzami Gehwar, and that same night they contrived to get him out of Cordova. He was accompanied in his escape by some brave Alameri cavaliers, who gave him their protection to Xeres: here they left him in the house of the Wali of that city, a man in whom Alcasim had much confidence. This also took place in the year 413.

The army of Manzor, the lord of Sanhaga, and of the Wali Gilfeya, had meanwhile been strongly reinforced by the cavalry and foot-soldiers which Alcasim Ben Hamud had sent them on his arrival at Cordova, and they consequently descended to the Vegas of Granada, there to give battle to the troops of the King Abderahman Almortadi. On that spacious field the two armies met accordingly, and attacking each other with equal fury as if by common accord, they maintained the combat on either side with barbarous valour and unswerving constancy. The troops of Manzor presented a firm front to the impetuous charges made by the cavalry of Abderahman, and atrocious was the carnage that went raging over that fatal battle-ground. Neither side gave way; yet victory did at length appear to be declaring for the Alameries, and the party of Abderahman was on the point of triumph, when a fatal arrow, winged by the hand of some predestined enemy to the house of Omeya, wounded the king himself so grievously, that he expired at the very moment when messengers were entering his pavilion to announce that his troops and allies were in victorious pursuit of the foe.

Thus died that illustrious king, and with him fell the highly placed hopes of his followers. The unhappy news

were soon made known, and the death of Abderahman brought dejection to the spirit of the bravest among his generals. The enemy had meanwhile fled to the mountains; and the lord of Sanhaga, with his portion of the opposing army, had entrenched himself in Granada.

When the report of King Abderahman's downfall had reached Cordova, all hearts were seized with grief, seeing that the Iris whence they had augured the calm of serenity, and which had appeared with the flight of King Alcasim from their city, was now removed, and their hope of repose after so many civil discords seemed also to be taken away. The partizans of the house of Omeya were preparing triumphal arches for the entrance of Abderahman into his capital, in that fatal hour when the news of his death was brought them. All the city was thereby filled with dismay, the inhabitants trembling in fear and despair as they thought of the horrors that must ensue on the renewed entrance of the barbarians, and of all the calamities preparing for them by the frightful warfare again to recommence even in the very heart of their already exhausted city.

CHAP. CXIV.—Of another descendant of Abderahman the great, Abderahman Almostadir Billah.

The Alameries of Cordova, and all the partizans of the house of Omeya, now turned their eyes on Abderahman Ben Hixem Ben Abdelgiabar Ben Abderahman Anasir, a choice which they were assured would meet with popular approval in Cordova, as well as in all the cities of that portion of Spain which is called Andalusia. Abderahman Ben Hixem was brother to the renowned Mohamad El Mohdi Billah: he was twenty-two or twenty-three years old at the time when he was chosen king, and was proclaimed by all the Walies, Viziers, Alchatibes, and principal nobles of Andalusia, in the moon of Ramazan, in the year 114. The new sovereign was of fair stature and pleasing countenance; he had good ability, and in his early youth was considered to be of laudable habits and life. He was

called Abul Motaraf, and, when proclaiming him their king, the people gave him the title of Almostadir Billah.*

Abu Muhamad Ben Huzum El Faqui describes Abderahman Almostadir as an erudite and eloquent youth, who was besides a good poet: and Hayan tells us that there was not at that time a more noble person in his family than Abderahman himself. Letters were despatched to all the provinces and capitanaries or military districts, to the end that all should acknowledge his claims and swear obedience to his rule; the Chotba was made for him in every mosque, and all applauded the judicious selection thus made of a great grandson of the illustrious Abderahman the Third, hoping from the noble youth so nearly related to that great sovereign the reparation of all the many evils which had now so long been suffered by the Moslemah of Spain.

But how vain are the hopes of man! Offended by that selection, and the preference thus shown to Abderahman, his own cousin, Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala took an oath of vengeance against all the Alameries and nobles of Cordova; determined in his secret soul to deprive his cousin of the throne, or to die in that attempt.

The proclamation of Abderahman Almostadir had taken place in the moon of Ramazan; and the Easter of Alfitra or the close of Ramazan having come, the king saw cause to desire that the unlimited license permitted to themselves by his Andalusian and Sclavonian guard should be repressed by the strong hand, seeing that during the disorders of the period of revolt just passed, they had formed the habit of going through the city, in the time of those festivals, committing every kind of excess, appearing to believe that every thing was to be endured at their hands, and that all the citizens were bound to yield obedience to their insolent commands.

The rules by which that body of soldiers was regulated now received a revisal: many of their privileges were taken away from them, many of their exemptions were recalled: and in these regulations the king did no more than give evidence of the rectitude by which he was governed. But

* Almostadir Billah—he whose hope is in the aid of God; or the Confider in the protection of Allah.—*Condé.*

the turbulent soldiery thus restrained, were greatly displeased by those changes; the African Zenetes were more particularly offended, and many of them declared in their murmurs that the King Abderahman Almostadir ought rather to have been chosen the Prefect or Chief of a band of solitaries, an abbot of hermits in the desert, rather than as king to occupy the throne of Cordova.

Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala, the cousin of the king, did not fail to profit by these dispositions among the royal guard: availing himself of the opportunities afforded him by the possession of great riches, he soon obtained much popularity among them; and, by favour of certain light and inconsiderate youth of the nobles, he contrived to engage these troops in a conspiracy as hasty as it was traitorous and cruel. On the twenty-seventh of the moon Dylcada a band of the guard thus conspiring entered the king's apartments at the hour of dawn, and before King Abderahman had risen: they cut down the Sclavonians who endeavoured to defend the door of the royal chamber, when Abderahman himself, disturbed by the clash of weapons and the cries of his Sclavonian guard, who had remained faithful to him, awoke and sprang from his bed. He defended himself for some time with his sword: but what could one man do against a multitude? He was soon overthrown, and the assassins cut him to pieces with inhuman cruelty.

That done, they then marched through the streets of the city with their ensanguined weapons still bare in their hands, proclaiming Muhamad, their employer, King of Cordova; and, entering the houses of certain among the principal Xeques and Viziers, whom they slew, they completed their work by plundering the dwellings of those murdered men of all the riches they contained.

And now, in all that populous city, there was so little firmness to oppose violence, that all the inhabitants, Xeques and Generals, Cadies and Alchatibes, as well as the unarmed people, remained intimidated and amazed in presence of that turbulent horde; they listened to those uncalled-for and violent proclamations without strength or resolution to oppose themselves to the disorderly troop of assassins now revelling in their streets, as without courage to avenge the innocent blood of the good king Abderahman

Almostadsir, whose only desire had been to obtain repose for them, and who died in the endeavour to free them from the oppressions of an insolent soldiery. This monarch, worthy of a happier fate, had occupied the throne forty-seven days only when he came to the untimely end above described.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that the letters which King Abderahman had sent to the Walies all over Spain, with respect to the oath of allegiance, had just been responded to by the replies desired, when, at the moment that he was receiving them, the Fates cut short his thread of life. He left no heirs, and his death was all the more deeply lamented in every province of Spain where the virtues of his youth had caused the wearied people to conceive hopes of repose, to be enjoyed beneath the protection of that monarch and his posterity for a long series of years.

Shortly before this period, the King Yahye Ben Aly had returned from Africa, whither he had repaired for the arrangement of his affairs, and had for some little time contented himself with Algezira Alhadra and Medina Malaga, both which cities he held in his hands. But, hearing of his uncle Alcasim's flight from Cordova, and the state of matters in that city, he sent a body of his cavalry to Xeres, where he knew Alcasim to have taken refuge, demanding that his kinsman should be given up to him. The Wali of Xeres surrendered his person accordingly, when King Yahye kept him in a rigorous imprisonment, wherein he remained even to the period of his death, although that event did not take place until many years after Yahye had himself departed from life. Abulfeda informs us that Alcasim lived twenty years after the death of his brother Aly, and adds that there could be no cause for the disagreement between himself and his nephew excepting only this,—that he, being old, and the uncle of Yahye, could not resolve to pay homage and obedience to his nephew, and the son of his brother.

CH. CXV.—Of Muhamad Mostacfi Billah.

Enthroned with the violence above described, Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Obeidala was called by his guards and

partizans El Mostacfi Billah. His treasures, scattered with a prodigal hand, obtained for him the hearts of the troops and the populace; all classes were compelled to swear obedience to his rule, and the Chotba was made for him in all the mosques. His Zenetes and guards were bound to his interests by new privileges and immunities, which he granted to them with unsparing liberality, adding to these a more amply furnished table, arms of increased value, and vestments of more splendid brilliancy than they had ever before possessed. To the nobles who were his partizans Muhamad gave governments and other offices, even to their heart's content, and, having constructed that kind of safeguard around him, he believed himself secure. Nor did he then give himself further care for anything but the restoration of the gardens, and other places of pleasaunce surrounding his Alcazar of Medina Azahra, thinking only of passing his hours in all the delights and enjoyments of this life. Little did Muhamad concern himself with the government of the provinces, nor did he give any attention to the defence of the frontiers. The Walies and Alcaides of the towns were left to rule as absolute masters therein, disposing freely of the rents and revenues of every kind* paid into the public treasury by the various classes of contributors.

From these causes the treasure of the state became gradually diminished, although the king received no portion of the same for his own expenses. The Exchequer or Treasury of the Divan Alâta, which had been set apart for rewards and gratifications to be conferred only on those who had performed good service to the state, was in like manner exhausted by the profligate liberalities of Muhamad; his own riches, although of vast amount, but only just sufficing to the expenditure required for the due splendour and fitting propriety of the royal house.

It thus became needful that the Almojarifes, or receivers of the public revenues, should obtain resources by means previously unattempted, and they oppressed the towns of

* In addition to the Azaque, or tenth of all the fruits of the earth, with that of the increase of flocks and herds and of the proceeds of industry, there were the Charaga, or dues of import and export; the Taadil, or tax paid by the retail dealers; the rent of the markets; and the capitation tax, exacted from Jews and Christians.—*Condé.*

Andalusia by new and unheard-of exactions. But, although these heavy taxes drew large amounts, yet all was not sufficient to meet the immoderate demands made on the treasury of Andalusia, called on as it was to make up the deficiency occasioned by the disorders which had been suffered to intrude into the administration of the contributions due from the provinces.

The king meanwhile thought of nothing but his amusements. He passed his time in listening to the pleasing verses repeated by the poets of his court, or to the canzonets written by the Vizier, Zeidun of Cordova, wherein that author celebrated the loveliness of the beautiful Habiba, daughter of the king Muhamad, whose affection for that child of his love amounted almost to folly. Abdelmelic Ben Ziadatala, called El Tabeni, also presented his ingenious verses to the sovereign, with his book on the manners and customs of the Arabs, which was likewise in verse. The house of this Abdelmelic Ziadatala in Cordova was a kind of academy; it was frequented by all who loved letters, and he was himself renowned for his accomplishments throughout Africa, Egypt, Syria, and Arabia. To King Muhamad it was that the Vizier and Alchatib, Abdelwahib Abul Moqueira, wrote the dedication of his collection of poetry; and Abdel Wahidi of Cordova, who was a native of Cabra, and held the office of Walilcoda of Jativa, also dedicated his elegant discourses in prose and verse to that monarch, as did the eminent poet Aben Chalid Ben El Tarus the collection of poems which he made in his praise, and Abul Chuleni, of Beja near Seville, his most celebrated Canzonets.

King Mohamad did not fail at length to perceive that in the demands made on the people, the Receivers were proceeding in a manner little in accordance with order and justice; yet he knew not how to remedy those evils, nor by what means he could prevent the vexations not unfrequently described to him. His inability and negligence combined caused the just complaints of his people to remain as if disregarded; and from these disorders it ensued that a prince, whose natural disposition was liberal and generous, obtained the reputation of being exacting and avaricious, some uttering murmurs against him because they paid too much, and others because they received too little.

And, for the greater calamity of that unhappy time, when all public virtue seemed to be extinct, it was not possible to persuade the Walies of the provinces that their duty was to maintain concord among themselves for the benefit of the state, nor did they listen to the few wise men who implored them to offer an example of union and obedience to the less important functionaries acting beneath their orders: thus the generals commanding on the frontiers, with the Alcaides of fortresses and those of the towns, were alike disobedient and wanting in their duty. Many of these men had risen from poor and obscure beginnings, but, in the various revolutions and disorders of the state, had succeeded in raising themselves to power, and having intruded themselves into important offices, had become an object of fear to those beneath them. Even the people, corrupted in all parts of the kingdom by the perpetual disquietudes, conspiracies, and rebellions of the time, had become accustomed to a life of violence and tumult; many classes among them preferring that disorderly state of things to a life of repose, seeing that by the former they were furnished with occasions for effecting robberies, and taking vengeance on those who had offended them, with that impunity which unhappily must ever attend crime in periods of civil warfare and popular revolution.

The king was most probably unconscious of the political infirmity thus prevailing among his people, or, if he knew of its existence, he had neither the firmness required to repress the manifestations thereof, nor the power to apply such remedies as might have tended in the course of time to eradicate the evil. Neither did he know that those very men, whose disloyal and traitorous forgetfulness of the most sacred obligations had unjustly placed him on the throne, were now impatient of his seat thereon, and anxious to dispossess him of the same. Yet this was a fact that could not be long concealed; and Muhamad, becoming intimidated by the rumours which at length reached him, fled his capital, and passed the greater part of his time at Azahra, where he was nevertheless far from being in security. He then began to distrust his guard and the most familiar of his attendants: nor without good reason, no long time having elapsed before the seditious lovers of change having incited the multitude to rebellion, that uncertain populace gathered

in fierce troops about the houses of the Viziers and Cadies, which they surrounded with insolent outcries, demanding the deposition of certain among the great officers, with the heads of others, and finishing by requiring that the King and his Hagibs should be put to death.

Muhamad having been warned of the danger threatening him by the few generals of his guard who still remained faithful to him, and these attending him with a body of African cavalry, he left the Alcazar of Zahra in the night—taking with him all his family. It is true that he was abandoned on the road by many who had made profession of intending to share his fortunes; but he succeeded in reaching the fortress of Ucles in the territory of Toledo, where he was received with much kindness by the Alcaide of that place, Abderahman Ben Muhamad Ben Selim Ben Said Ben Almondar, the son and grandson of brave generals, who had held the government of the same from the time of King Abderahman the Great.

But even here his enemies found means to reach the unhappy Muhamad Ben Abderahman; and he had not been long at Ucles before he received his death. The manner of that event was on this wise: a dish composed of chickens, prepared with a certain herb which grows in that country, was placed before him, and he unsuspectingly ate thereof: but the herbs thus used were poisonous, and of their effects Muhamad died, in the year 415. The duration of his reign was seventeen months, and he left no son to succeed him.

In this same year, and on Thursday, the 13th of the moon of Giumada Primera, Abdallah Ben Rebie of Cordova died in that city, and in the morning dawn of the Juma or Friday he was buried in the house of Xuhaid, being followed to the grave by a large company: he was not taken to the Macbora or cemetery, from fear of the barbarians who were at that time infesting the vicinity of the capital. May God be gracious to him!

CHAP. CXVI.—Of yahye ben aly.

With the news of all that had befallen in Cordova, the partizans of King Yahye Ben Aly Ben Hamud took care to hasten to Malaga, when they described to him the revolutions and disquietudes suffered by the state, and incited him to march on the capital with his troops, for the purpose of obtaining possession thereof, thus placing himself on the throne, which they declared to be his of right, in virtue of the declaration made by King Hixem in favour of his father.

Yahye Ben Aly was then governing his dominions of Malaga, Algezira Alhadra, Cebta, and Tangiers, with infinite moderation and justice: he was beloved by his people, and, desirous of his aggrandizement, they offered to seat him on the throne of Cordova. Thus it was rather by the will of his ambitious partizans, than by his own, that Yahye Ben Aly departed from his city of Malaga and repaired to Cordova.

The principal inhabitants, and such honourable men as might still be found, rejoiced in his coming, because they hoped to be delivered by his means from the tumultuous anarchy which had so long torn the city to pieces: many of them therefore went forth to receive him, and to express the confidence which they felt in his prudence and good government. Nor did the citizens generally refuse the customary manifestation of their adhesion; the entrance of the new sovereign put all in movement, and he was greeted on his passage with numerous demonstrations of gladness. He alighted in the first instance at the Aljama, and after having made the prayer of Adohar, he passed through the principal streets amidst the festive acclamations of the populace.

The new king then wrote to the Walies and Governors of provinces, requiring them to repair to Cordova, there to take the oath of allegiance; but the more distant rulers excused themselves under various pretexts, while many of those who were nearer openly declared that they did not acknowledge him to be their king, but an intruder called into the country by a faction which they despised.

Among those who thus avowed their disobedience, the

king was most of all displeased with the Wali of Seville, and desiring to make such an example of him as might serve for the warning of the rest, he commanded his Alcaides of Xerez and Malaga to unite their cavalry and foot-soldiers with those of Sidonia and Arcos; which done, they were ordered to direct their march on Seville: King Yahye Ben Aly, with the cavalry and other troops of Cordova, also preparing to join them.

And here it will be proper to say who was that Wali of Seville, and what were his parentage and condition, with the qualities of the man. Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Ahmed El Lahmi, called Abulcasim, had been Cadi of Seville during the short reign of Alcasim Ben Hamud, when his prudence and sagacity enabled him to obtain all he desired from that king, who made him governor of the province: but, in return for that benefit, when Alcasim departed from Cordova in the year 413, Mohamad Ben Ismail seized the sovereignty of the district as the independent possession of himself and his posterity.

Abu Rafe relates that this Muhamad was the son of Ismael Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Coraix Ben Abed Ben Amer Ben Aslam Ben Amer Ben Itaf Ben Naim, and he adds that Itaf and Naim came into Spain at the time when Baleg Ben Baxir El Coraixi made his descent on the country. Itaf was of Hemesa, in Syria, and of the tribe of Lahmi: he had his origin from Alaris, a village situate on the confines of Algifer, which is between Egypt and Syria. Having arrived in Spain, Itaf established himself at Caria Jumin, in the district of Taxena and jurisdiction of Seville, a place situate on the shore of the Great River. Others say that this race was of the sons of Nooman Ben Almondhir Ben Measemai, and add that they prided themselves much on their nobility, the illustrious antiquity of which has been often sung in melodious numbers, as may be seen in the eulogies and verses of many ingenious poets and men of letters, in those written by Aben Lebana among others.

Abu Meruan Ben Hayan tells us that the father of Muhamad, Wali of Seville, was Ismael Aben Abed, a man greatly distinguished for prudence, and possessing much influence both before and after the commencement of the

civil war. He exercised considerable authority in the city and Comarca of Seville, and being very wealthy, lived in a state of pomp and ostentation but slightly differing from that affected by kings. No private cavalier of Andalusia could equal him in that respect, nor had any so vast a number of servants as those which formed the household of Ismail Aben Abed. He was very liberal moreover, and received to the shelter of his roof not a few of the most illustrious exiles and banished nobles of Cordova, at times of public calamities, which were then but too frequent, and when civil discords were kindled in the capital. This Ismail is furthermore described as a crafty person, but one of considerable erudition: he was also a good cavalier, of very firm mind and much apparent wisdom, but in effect one who always contrived to attain his ends with certainty and security. He brought up his son Muhamad in the same cautious policy, and taught him to overcome the greatest difficulties.

When Muhamad Ben Ismail was informed that the King Yahye Ben Aly was marching against him, he placed a body of the cavalry of Seville and Carmona in ambush at a convenient point, with orders to sally forth when the occasion should present itself. Muhamad himself, with other forces of foot and horse, advanced to meet King Yahye, when the light companies of Cordova had several skirmishes with those of Seville, and after a certain time the hosts of both the contending parties came into presence. The troops of Muhamad soon began to yield ground, yet doing so by little and little only, according to a stratagem determined on by their leader, and as men who were making their best efforts to avoid that necessity, until at length they feigned a retreat which ended in a seeming defeat and disorderly flight. But when they had brought the men of Cordova so far in pursuit as to be within the ambush mentioned above, the forces of Muhamad turned with great impetuosity on their supposed victors, and this ambush also bursting forth from its hiding-place, the troops of King Yahye were surrounded. That prince himself, fighting in the hottest of the battle, was pierced through and through by a lance which nailed him to the saddle, and receiving other wounds at the same time, he fell dead from his horse.

Such was the unhappy fate of that good king, whose virtues promised a happy reign. The battle in which he lost his life was fought on the 7th day of the moon Muharram, in the year 417. His head was cut off by command of Muhamad Ismail, who sent it to Seville, with the news of his victory, while the cavaliers of Cordova and the people of Malaga retired mournful and vanquished from the field.

CHAP. CXVII.—Of the reign of Hixem el motad billah.

When the intelligence of that unfortunate battle, and of the death of Yahye Ben Aly, reached Cordova, all the honourable men of the city were much grieved thereby, seeing that the well-founded hopes which they had conceived from the known prudence and justice of that hapless prince were thus destroyed. The Divan immediately assembled, and by the influence of Abilhezami Ben Gehwar, Vizier of the city, and that of the Alameri cavaliers, the Walies were induced to proclaim for their king and lord Hixem Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelmelic Ben Abderahman Anasir, a great grandson of that illustrious sovereign, namely, and brother to the excellent King Abderahman Almortadi. This Hixem was then living in retirement at a fortress called Ham Albonte, the Alcaide of which was Abdallah Ben Casim El Fehri.

The choice thus made was applauded by the people, and the new king was proclaimed with demonstrations of the most sincere gladness, under the title of El Motad Billah. This happened at the end of the moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 417. Hixem Ben Muhamad was born in the year 364; the mother who bore him was named Oneiza, and he had a brother called El Mortadi, who was four years his junior. He sent his messengers to announce that voluntary election made by the council and the people of Cordova; and being a wise and moderate man, he gave no evidence of rejoicing in his sudden elevation to the throne, but on the contrary was manifestly reluctant to exchange the

security and peace of his retirement for the cares of a perilous command.

His reply to the envoys who announced his election was to that effect: he admitted that the love of the people of Cordova to his family, and their good will to his person, were very gratifying, but added, that he was not prepared to take on his shoulders the heavy charge of the government; nor was it until after some days of diffident reluctance that Hixem Ben Muhamad yielded to the entreaties of those who had elected him, and accepted the crown. Nay, even after he had done so, the new monarch, remaining doubtful of the inconstant people to whom he was unknown, made a long delay before he could be prevailed on to repair to Cordova, and continued on the frontier, having taken the command of the troops then occupied in the defence of the same. This was the only pretext by which Hixem could justify his absence from the capital. He fought against the Infidels with various fortune, seeking to drive them back within their ancient limits, which they had overpassed on the frontier of eastern Spain, as well as on that of Gallicia and Castile; those misbelievers being tempted to that intrusion by the opportunities which the civil discords of the Moslemah had so long afforded them.

On this occasion the king had done much honour to a very wise and learned man, the Alcaide Hixem Ben Muhamad Ben Hilel El Caisi, or Toledo, who had been the disciple of sages distinguished as Aben Abdus and El Chuzeni. This Alcaide was as remarkable for his bravery as for the excellence of his life and the austere piety of his conduct. He fasted with the utmost rigour, and celebrated the Idalfitra or Easter of the close of Ramazan, with his Rabitos or frontier-knights* in the most splendid manner,

* These Rabitos, or Moslemah knights of the frontier, professed extraordinary austerity of life, and devoted themselves voluntarily to the continual exercise of arms. They bound themselves by a vow to defend the frontier from the Christians; and all these cavaliers were of high distinction. Of the most surprising constancy in the fatigues of war, they were not permitted by their rules to fly before the enemy, but were held by their vows to fight and die without moving from the point they defended. It appears highly probable that from these Rabitos pro-

expending all his savings of the year in feasting the troops of his fortress on that day.

The vestments of the Alcaide Hixem were very simple, and his food was of the most frugal kind: he had passed his whole life on the frontier, but died soon after the departure of the king, who had himself remained there three years all but two months, at the end of which time the Vizier Abul Huzaun Gehwar wrote entreating him to delay no longer, but at once to appear in his capital, where the people, greatly desiring to behold their king, and unquiet at his protracted absence, were becoming discontented.

Abul Huzam added, that from the light discourses and complaints of the populace, the seditious were already taking occasion to foment discords, which might easily become the pretext for serious commotions; that the Governors or Walies of the provinces in the interior of the kingdom were openly manifesting their intention of rendering themselves independent, winning over to their interests the hearts of the people, whom they ruled by the seeming blandness and equity of their government, and were meanwhile acting on all occasions in the manner of absolute sovereigns, not permitting that the contributions or revenues of their provinces should be sent to the capital.

On receiving these advices, King Hixem Ben Muhamad departed from the frontier, and repaired with much dilgence to Cordova, making his entrance into that city on the 8th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 420. He was received with all possible demonstrations of gladness, and, surrounded with an innumerable concourse of people, proceeded to his Alcazar. Nor did any long time elapse before the cordial kindness of his manner, his gentle and generous treatment of all who approached him, and the attention he paid to the upright administration of justice, had wholly gained the hearts of the citizens; while the repose that succeeded his arrival repressed the wicked hopes of those who were expecting new revolts, and laid the needful restraint upon their enterprises, calming at the same time the

ceeded the Military Orders of Spain, as well as those of the East—all so renowned for their bravery and for the services they rendered to Christianity. The rules of both institutions have much similarity. —*Condé.*

disquietudes of the more honourable Moslemah, who were in dread of that misfortune.

King Hixem Ben Muhamad took care to visit the hospitals and houses of refuge for the poor, in his own person, as he did the Madrisas or schools for children, the higher seminaries for youth, and the colleges for advanced students; the most especial attention of the king was, however, bestowed on the sick, and his own physicians were charged to pay a daily visit to the Almarestanes or infirmaries. Among the changes made by Hixem Ben Muhamad was the deposition from his office of Abderahman Ben Ahmed Ben Said Ben Muhamad Ben Baxir Ben Garcia,* called Abulmotarif, who had been elected Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova by the King Aly Ben Hamud. He was a very eloquent person, and had been greatly favoured by the family of Hamud: the office of Cadi and Prefect of Prayer had been held by him for twelve years ten months and four days, according to Abu Meruan Ben Hayun, and, according to the same authority, he retired into private life on being deprived thereof, from which time he dwelt secluded in his house at Cordova until his death, which took place a little more than two years after his deposition from office, when he was buried with great honour in the Macbora or cemetery of Aben Abas. The day of Abderahman Ben Ahmed's funeral was a Saturday, and was about the middle of the moon Xaban.

About this time the following verses were recited by Obeidyas, the Chatib or secretary of Obeidala Ben Merman: their subject was the palace inhabited by Obeidala, and the magnificence of which was such as to compete with that of the Royal Alcazar, and to much surpass in its splendour the palace of Mogueiz and the houses of Almanzor:—

> "Bright Alcazar of Abi Meruan,
> Worthy to be the Hall of Paradise;
> What shall surpass thy beauty, rich and varied
> As are the hues of changeful leopard skins.

* In the Arabian documents of this period it is not unusual to find Gothic and Christian names, as Gondemir Ben Davad, Ahmed Ben Guzman, Mohamad Ben Fortune, Abdallah Ben Golier, Ben Borangel, Ben Mendis, Ben Munios, Ben Maurice, Ben Radmir, Ben Garcia, Ben Sancho, Ben Fortis, Ben Gulindo, &c.—*Condé.*

Fair home of bliss, thy radiant chambers shine
With jaspers rare and marbles quaintly carved;
They glitter with the gold that Tibar sends
As 'twere to teach us what may be the home
Of him whom Fortune favours.

King Hixem El Motad Billah endeavoured to bring the Walies of the provinces to their duty by reasoning and gentle means: he wrote amicable letters, wherein he sought to prove the pressing necessity of union, concord, and peace, between all the Moslemah provinces of Spain, to the end that the kingdom might be the better prepared to make head against the Infidels, and might recover the territory which the long reign of civil discord had caused it to lose on the frontiers, since it was certain that, without a good understanding among themselves, they could not hope for security from without, any more than for the maintenance of public happiness within the realm. Nor did the Walies deny the force of these reasonings; they admitted the truth of all the king advanced, and acknowledged the legitimate authority of the Caliph of Cordova; but, in point of fact, they gave little heed to what he had said,—they did not cease from their intrusive pretensions, and under various pretexts still continued to refuse the payment of the contributions and services which they ought to have remitted, such being due by their respective provinces to the state.

The king then became convinced that so grave an evil must be remedied by more severe measures, and resolved to attempt the gradual reduction of the disobedient Walies: he therefore charged Obeidala Ben Abdelaziz El Yahsebi with the subjection of the Algarve or west of Spain; and that general did in fact compel to their allegiance the Walies of Sibla, Oksonoba, Xilbe, and other cities, which were still governed by men who had been appointed for the most part by the King Yahye Ben Aly. The government of Gezira Saltis King Hixem El Motad Billah bestowed on the father of Obeidala Ben Abdelaziz El Yahsebi, even Abdelaziz El Becrui; but that Wali did not long continue to merit the confidence of his sovereign, since he also did his utmost to change the government thus entrusted to him into an independent lordship.

Now it had come to pass after the death of Abderahman

Almortadi, that the lord of Sanhaga, Almanzor Ben Zeiri, had made himself master of all the towns of Elvira and Granada, the weakened condition of Andalusia having permitted him to obtain possession of them in the first instance, and the constant presence of civil disorders in Cordova enabling him to make good his seat and secure himself firmly therein, before measures could be taken for his expulsion. Finding that he remained undisturbed in his acquisitions, Almanzor Ben Zeiri then departed for Africa, leaving in his place a very prudent and valorous general, his nephew Habus Ben Balkim. Alchatib tells us that this Almanzor reigned seven years in Granada.

At Malaga the son of Yahye Ben Aly Ben Hamud, even Edris, governed as a king, and his people called him Amumenin, or Prince of the Faithful, having sworn fidelity and obedience to him with all solemnity at the death of his father, Yahye El Motadi, for so did they call Yahye Ben Aly. Edris himself they named El Olui, or the Exalted, and he was likewise called Abu Rafei. This Edris was a man of much charity and benevolence; he gave five hundred doubloons of gold to the poor on each succeeding Juma or Friday of the year; and the rectitude of his character, with his generosity and other excellent qualities, were celebrated in numerous verses. He recalled from their banishment such nobles as had been wrongfully proscribed in the time of his father, restoring to them whatever they had previously possessed; and during his life there was never once heard a complaint of oppression. He was, moreover, a very learned man, and visited the schools with much interest, neither did he neglect the hospitals: the ear of the excellent Edris was ever open even to the humblest of his subjects, and his life was occupied with no other employment than that of conferring benefits and distributing favours. The Vizier of Edris and the governor of his state was his kinsman Muza Ben Afan; but this man finally proved a traitor, and assassinated his lord, at the instigation of the King of Sanhaga, Almoez Ben Badis.

In Denia, the government was conducted by Abdallah El Moaiti: he also was called king, and coined money with his own impress. But no long time elapsed before Mugehid Edim, his master, having returned from Majorca, not only

deprived him of the sovereignty, but banished him from the country. Abdallah El Moaiti then departed to the land of Cutema, and was never seen to raise his head again in this world, having died in those parts somewhere about the close of the year 432.

The Walies of Seville, Carmona, and Sidonia, were in like manner maintaining themselves in a complete independence of King Hixem, and as, during the two years of that monarch's reign, the fortune of arms was more frequently favourable to the rebel Walies than to himself, the virtuous king, finding his efforts vain, and desiring to put an end to the civil war so fatal to the interests of the country, consented to enter into a negociation with those rulers, and made terms of agreement with the greater part of them.

But by that moderation all the dwellers in Cordova were filled with discontent; they attributed to King Hixem El Motad Billah himself the slight success of his arms, and all the calamities of the period were soon considered to be the fault of their sovereign. The evil had indeed become such that it was now beyond remedy. The state was so much weakened by long disunion, that it no longer had power to contend with a rebellious Wali, since the discord had extended to nearly all the provinces, and there was none that could be implicitly depended on. The good and wholesome habits and customs of the Moslemah, as existing in past times, were known no more—all had become vitiated and corrupted: nor had this deterioration taken place by degrees,—it had come on with the impetuous haste of a torrent: whether zealous or lukewarm as Moslemah, and however firm in the faith, all seemed alike given over to the empire of their passions: the more active spirits were restless and ungovernable; the less energetic were indolent and apathetic; but all seemed to be agreed in one thing—indifference, namely, to the general welfare: at a word, the absence of public spirit was equally perceptible through all ranks, and the Spanish Moslemah well merited what was then said of them by King Hixem El Motad Billah, —"This generation can neither govern well, nor be well governed."

The Vizier of Hixem Ben Mohamad, even Huzam Ben Gehwar, advised his lord to avoid the capital and retire to

Medina Azarah, where he might the better secure his person from the perils of any sudden commotion, and from the insults of a popular insurrection, which the Vizier considered to be imminent; but the king felt so confident of the love and respect which his people of Cordova had always evinced for him, that he could not fear so ungrateful and unjust a return for his benefits. Yet the seditious leaders of the populace did not long delay to give him proof that his Vizier had judged them rightly; they excited the inconstant and inconsiderate multitude to rebellion, and demanded the deposition of King Hixem. For this purpose they availed themselves of the obscurity of night: and it would seem that men covered by the nocturnal shadows are bolder and more insolent than in the day, seeing that beneath the darkness they are not impeded by the blush which is naturally brought by the light of day to the cheek of him who commits a bad and dishonourable action. Thus, then, the assembled multitudes passed through all the streets of the city in the gloom of night, declaring with loud outcries that they would have the king depart from Cordova.

The Vizier Abul Gehwar was among the first to announce to King Hixem Ben Muhamad that the will of the unquiet and impetuous people had been expressed as hath been related; and the well-judging monarch, far from being dismayed at that intelligence, gave thanks to God that He had so been pleased to have it. With the break of day he departed from his Alcazar with his family and a good company of the cavalry of his guard, escorted by whom he retired to a country palace, whence he repaired on the following day to the fortress of Hisn Abi Xarif, which he had built. Many noble cavaliers of Cordova accompanied their king: among others the renowned Abdelbar El Nameri, a great poet, with Muhamad El Raini, who was also much distinguished for the elegance of his verses, and the learned Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic Ben Xobeid, author of the book called Hanut Alatar, which was filled with various compositions, both in prose and verse, and all of infinite beauty. Other friends and favoured servants of Hixem Ben Muhamad likewise proceeded with him to his retirement His departure from Cordova took place in the year 422; and

he remained in much tranquillity within the retreat he had chosen, until he had passed to the mercy of God, which event took place in the year 428.

The constancy of mind and many other virtues displayed by the admirable King Hixem Ben Muhamad, proved him the worthy descendant of his illustrious ancestors, and rendered him deserving of a better fate, or rather of living in times less adverse to the good and upright. In him the dynasty of the Omeyas of Spain found its close. That dynasty had commenced with Abderahman Ben Moavi in the year 138, and finished with the excellent Hixem Ben Muhamad in 422, after which none of that house reigned in the land.

The historian Alathir relates, that after the deposition of King Hixem El Motad Billah, a youth of the family of the Omeyas, who was in the flower of his age, pretended to the succession of the throne. The council and the leaders of the people replied that they did not desire to elect him their king, because they perceived that fortune had turned her back on all the Omeyas, and feared that the ruin of the state could not but ensue if the warning were disregarded. They bade him, therefore, rather look to the safety of his life and person, than seek his own destruction on the throne, taking pity on his youth, and having consideration for the nobility of his condition. But to all this the young man replied in these words,—"Let me be this day proclaimed king, and to-morrow take my life, if my adverse star shall so dispose it." Yet he could not persuade them, nor bring about the exaltation he desired; wherefore it is said that this Omeya disappeared that very day, and never more was anything heard either of him or his affairs. Thus passed the state and fortune of that house, as a thing that had never been.

Happy is he who hath done and laboured well, and praised for ever be the name of Him whose empire shall never end!

PART III.

CHAP. I.—Of the election of Gehwar, of his government, and of the state of the provinces.

The succession of the Omeyan princes on the throne of Cordova having been thus brought to an end, partly by the machinations of the Xeques and Walies, who sought to establish their own greatness on the ruin of that illustrious family, but also partly by the distrust and superstitious conviction of the people, who were persuaded that the fortunes of that race must have taken an unfavourable turn, the members of the Council and Aljama of Cordova assembled together, and began to deliberate on the steps next to be taken.

They declared it to be an indisputable fact, known to all men, that in the whole realm of Spain there now remained no one of the family of the Omeyas, small or great, rich or poor, and they next cast their eyes on the virtues and excellent qualities of Gehwar, a wise and prudent Vizier, the descendant of Hagibs, Walies, and Chancellors, who had been ever in the councils of the by-gone kings.

This illustrious person was much esteemed and beloved by the people: he had secured the respect of all parties; and in the dangerous period of revolt and civil discord through which the city of Cordova had so painfully passed, Gehwar had constantly distinguished himself by an extraordinary impartiality, a love of justice but too rarely found at that time, and a never-failing regard for the common welfare.

For these virtues, which were known to all, Gehwar received the unanimous voices of the council, and being proclaimed king, was enthroned in Cordova amidst the acclamations of the whole people. It is true that there were not wanting statesmen who dreaded the concealed ambition which they suspected to lurk behind the wise and moderate

conduct of their new ruler, but Gehwar found means to conciliate even the most distrustful, and caused all who approached his person to conceive the most flattering hopes of a prosperous and glorious reign.

With a cautious policy which proved the excellence of his understanding, Gehwar had no sooner received the oath of allegiance from the Xeques, Alcaides, and principal inhabitants of the city, than he hastened to establish a new form of government eminently aristocratic in its principle, and concentrating the chief powers of the state in a Council: this Gehwar composed of the most important, influential, and honourable citizens of Cordova. In these men he vested the whole authority and force of the sovereignty, reserving to himself nothing more than the presidency of that Divan. All that was now done, therefore, each decree and every command, went forth to the people in the name of this Council; and if any one addressed a petition or request to the king in particular, he replied as follows:—"In this matter I can neither grant nor refuse; it belongs to the Council to decide, and I am but one of the Divan."

In this manner did Gehwar extend the mantle of peace over the people of Cordova, and from the first he won over to himself the minds of all; the most distinguished men of the city were devoted to his government heart and mind, nor was there a dweller in Cordova that failed to sound his praise. Among other proofs given by Gehwar of his moderation was this, that he refused for some time to abandon his private residence for the royal palaces, and when at length it became needful that he should do so, the regulations introduced by his command into the arrangements of the household were such that the service and economy of the royal abode were found to differ but slightly from those of a private dwelling. The new sovereign reduced, among other things, the great number of the servants, and freed the gates of the Royal Alcazars from that enormous crowd of occupants by which they were beset in the time of the Omeyas. He dismissed a large part of the Life Guards also, and established so judicious an economy in every department of expenditure made for the palace, that a very important diminution in the cost of the household was the immediate result.

One of the many praiseworthy regulations of Gehwar, and that for which he was at the time most gratefully celebrated, was the removal of all that horde of informers and pretended lawyers, who had long been suffered to live by calumnies, by the fomenting of quarrels, and by the prolongation of law-suits. In the place of these men the king established a closely-limited number of legal officers, all of whom he caused to be paid in proportion to their appointments, and after the manner of the judges. The king also prohibited the continuance in their usurped functions of those pretended physicians and ignorant charlatans who professed to cure disease without the knowledge and experience that could alone qualify them to do so. He furthermore decreed the institution of a college, by whose members, all of whom were men of learning and practical experience, every man should be examined who might thenceforth present himself for the exercise of medicine or the service of the hospitals.

The due provision of cities with all needful articles of food was another object of the king's attention, and one of the results of his care in that respect was to render Cordova the granary of all Spain, seeing that within a certain period of time it rose to that eminence; the markets and store-houses of the capital becoming the resort of dealers from every province of the kingdom.

It was by King Gehwar, moreover, that the Almoxarifs or collectors of dues, and the Alcaldes or inspectors of products, were established; he also appointed superintendents to all the gates and public squares, their office being to see that justice was maintained, and that the due liberty of coming and going was accorded to all whose business called them to those places of assemblage. All the chiefs of these offices were bound to render an account of their administration at stated periods to the council of state.

Among the most carefully-selected and most trusted of the new king's Alwacires or ministers were those to whom he confided the police of the city and its guardianship by day as well as by night. These officers distributed arms among the most respected inhabitants of each quarter, to the end that those men might watch the boundary of their own quarter and the district with which they were familiar. The streets of shops and ranges of booths were closed by

command at a given hour, and all the streets of the city were defended by gates for the prevention of those nocturnal disorders by which the more peaceable of their inhabitants had been afflicted in other times, and with the purpose of rendering it more difficult for such criminals as were flying from one night-watch to escape into the rounds of another, thereby eluding the pursuit of justice. The guardians thus entrusted with the maintenance of order were expected to exhibit an increasing vigilance during the period of their watch, and were bound to furnish an exact account of whatever they had observed to those who followed them, with the relation of all that had taken place within their hours of guard.

By these cares the city lived in tranquillity and within the shadow of just laws; its inhabitants prospered, the merchants and artisans became rich, and all showered benedictions on the head of Gehwar, who, seated on the throne as on a watch-tower, looked down from that elevation with eyes that were ever mindful of all things appertaining to the good government of the state, or which were required for the well-being of his people.

To the Walies of the provinces King Gehwar wrote letters informing them of his election to the crown, and calling on them to appear for the purpose of proffering him their oaths of allegiance; but the greater part of them excused themselves with various pretexts, feigning urgent causes whereby they were at that time prevented from repairing to Cordova, yet concluding with false protestations of submission, and offering the insincere expression of their wishes for his prosperity and continued welfare. Those who permitted themselves the most openly to manifest their indifference to the king's election, were the Walies of Toledo, Saragossa, Malaga, Seville, Granada, and Badajoz: but Gehwar endeavoured to conceal his perception of their true motives, and the conviction which he felt of their resolve to introduce division and anarchy into the Realm which he was so earnestly labouring to tranquillize. He wrote to them again, therefore, expressing his approbation of the zeal with which they were giving themselves to the interests of their respective governments, and the care they manifested for the welfare of the provinces entrusted to their rule, reminding them at

the same time that the security of the kingdom, and its continuance in the prosperity then commencing, depended wholly on the union and concord which he hoped to see maintained through all its provinces.

But while the prudent Gehwar was thus employed for the common weal, let us see what was in fact the state of those provinces, and relate the manner in which the Walies of the same had gradually raised themselves to the sove reignty of their respective governments.

The Wali of Seville at that time, and who had then become the absolute master of the whole district, was Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Abed, called Abul Casem. His family was originally of Hemesa, and his descent is described as follows:—When Baxir Ben Baleg, the Coraixi, had made his descent on Andalusia, there came with him two Syrian leaders called Itaf Ben Naim and Naamin Ben Almondar Ben Mê Alcemai, both of a hamlet called Alaris, which was on the extreme border of Algifer, between Syria and Egypt. They were of the tribe of Lahmi, and from these men did the family of Abed claim descent, boasting much of the antiquity of their origin, and declaring that their forefathers had established themselves in Seville at the time when the division of the lands was made in the days of Gesam Ben Derar. They add, that Itafa Ben Naim then selected his abode in Caria Jumin, which was in the territory of Taxena, and within the jurisdiction of Seville.

Ismail Aben Abed, the father of that Mohamad who bore rule in the reign of Gehwar Ben Mohamad Ben Gehwar, had secured to himself a large share of authority and consideration in Andalusia, by his prudence and by the influence of his great riches: both these he maintained during the civil wars, and even after they had ceased to afflict the land. He lived with a parade and ostentation but little different from that affected by kings, insomuch that there was no private person in all Spain who surpassed or even equalled him in that respect. The possessor of extensive domains in many Comarcas, and of immense herds of cattle in every kind, Ismail Aben was also the lord of innumerable servants, and expended riches uncountable in a spirit that was highly generous and liberal. His house was the asylum of all the most illustrious among the cavaliers who were per-

petually flying from Cordova during the civil discords; and the frank liberality which he displayed, with the apparent candour of his disposition, gained him the hearts of all these personages; while the wisdom of his councils and the sagacity of his discourse secured him the respect of his visitors, and promoted those views of aggrandizement which the wily Ismail secretly entertained.

These views were nevertheless not realized to their full extent during the lifetime of Ismael, but after his death the path he had marked out was followed carefully by his son Muhamad, who contrived to obtain from the King, Alcasem Ben Hamud, the appointment of Cadi of Seville, that ruler manifesting an unbounded confidence in the loyalty as well as prudence of Muhamad; but in return for his benefits the crafty son of Ismail, following carefully in the footsteps of his father, took advantage of the disorders reigning in Cordova, insomuch that when Alcasem was driven from the capital, and fled as a fugitive to the Comarcas of Seville, the ungrateful Cadi made himself master of the city by means of those arts which he had learned from his father Aben Ismail Ben Abed.

This happened in the year of the Hegira 413;* and Muhamad Aben Ismael was assisted in his attempt by the most illustrious Xeques and Viziers of the province, even those who had been long the most distinguished for their loyalty, and who were the most influential from the importance of their offices; he having won over the greater part by his liberality, or caused them to fall into his snares by other methods, so that all were among his most fervent partizans. The sons of Abu Becar Zubeidi, the Grammarian, who had been preceptor to King Hixem the Second, were in the number of Muhamad's more zealous followers, as were those of Airica and other men of distinction, whom he attached to him by the employments which he conferred on them, or bound to his party by the friendship which he showed them. The most important offices in southern Spain had indeed been gradually entrusted to the creatures of Muhamad Aben Ismael, who thus formed his sovereignty and successfully prepared the first steps to the declaration of independence

* A.D. 1022 or 1023.

on which he had long determined. This he finally completed during the rebellion which was commenced by the battle wherein he turned his troops against King Yahye, over whom he obtained a decisive victory near Ronda, in the year 416. From that time Muhamad had lost no opportunity of aggrandisement, and had obtained possession of fortresses more or less powerful in almost every part of Andalusia.

Now there were certain astrologers and makers of horoscopes who had predicted to Muhamad Ben Ismail that his dynasty should endure until destroyed by the hands of men who should come from Sabdria, an island which, as they added, was nevertheless not the proper abode of those thus fated to work the downfall of his race. Muhamad instantly decided that the persons intimated in the dark sayings of the astrologers were no other than those of the Berezila family, whose connection with the Hagib Almanzor Ben Abi Amer had procured for them several extensive governments, with other charges and employments of high value, in Andalusia. Among these officers, Muhamad Aben Ismail fixed his attention more particularly on Muhamad Ben Abdallah Albarzeli, lord of Carmona and Ecija, who had raised himself to the independent rule of those cities during the revolution and civil wars resulting from the discords of the Hamudes, even Alcasim and Yahye Ben Hamud. Him, therefore, Muhamad Ben Ismail resolved to attack, and never to desist from making war upon him until he should have despoiled him of all that he possessed, and effected his destruction. He was thus on the point of laying siege to Carmona, when the letters of King Gehwar were brought to him from Cordova; but he did not abandon his intention on account of them,—nay, rather he made the more earnest efforts to press the siege and disembarrass himself of the enemy he feared, to the end that he might be the better prepared for the new contest which he could not but anticipate.

Now when the unhappy intelligence of the death of their King Yahye had reached the city of Malaga, the inhabitants thereof had despatched messengers into Africa conveying the news of that event to Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Abi Muza, known as Aben Bokina, and to the Sclavonian Naja, who both held governments in that country. These leaders

thereupon repaired without delay to Spain, whither they brought a brother of the deceased Yahye, even Edris Ben Aly Ben Hamud, whom they hastened to proclaim king in Malaga, giving him the title of Alolui and saluting him as Ameer Amumenin.

When thus called to the throne of Malaga, Edris Ben Aly, the brother of Yahye, was at Cebta, the government of which city he had for some time held with that of Tangia. His Xeques now advised him to appoint Hacen, the son of Yahye, as his substitute or Wali in Cebta, none proposing that either of the sons of Yahye should be made king, because they were but children of tender age: the number of those heirs thus left by the lamented King Yahye was but two,—Edris, who was the elder, and Hacen, who remained in Cebta as aforesaid, and who was the younger. He retained that office until the year 430. Being but children, these sons of Yahye were easily persuaded to do as others thought best.

The accession of Edris, the brother of Yahye, to the throne of Malaga took place in the year 418. He was a good and beneficent man, by whom all who had been exiled were permitted to return to their homes, and the property and lands of such as had forfeited their possessions he restored to their original owners. Edris was very charitable moreover; and on every Juma* he distributed 500 doubloons of gold in alms to the poor: a man of much learning, he paid frequent visits to the schools, and did not disdain to give his personal attention to the poor and humble: at a word, the benevolence of the king was ever ready for all who sought his aid. The Viziers of his dominions were two,—the Sclavonian Naja, who ruled in Africa, and Aben Bokina, with his kinsman Muza Ben Afan, who held the government of Malaga: the latter was his Hagib as well as Vizier; the former was the general of his armies.

That unfortunate event, the death of Yahye Ben Aly, caused the rise of another party in Algezira Alhadra; and this faction professed to act for the sons of Alcasem Ben Hamud, who were then living in the care of a truly honourable Xeque of Almagarava, known as Abul Hegiag. When

* Friday.

made acquainted with the death of Yahye Ben Aly, Abul Hagiag called together the people of Almagarava, at that time in Algesiras, and addressing the blacks, who were the troops of the country, he said to them, "Here do I present to you these youths, Muhamad and Hacen, sons of Alcasem Ben Hamud. They are your veritable Sovereigns and the descendants of your lords; they will be your leaders, and will render you happy provided only that your loyalty and courage be such as to equal their deserts." The Negros drew their swords, and swore to obey the commands and maintain the rights of their master's sons, even at the cost of their lives. Then Muhamad Ben Alcasim, although but a boy, gave them his thanks with much grace and self-possession; promising to hold it as a glory through all his days, that he was the companion and general of his Negros.

In Granada, likewise, there arose a cause of trouble, seeing that the then ruler, Habus Ben Mascan, nephew of the General Habus Ben Mascan Ben Zeiri of Sanhaga, far from obeying the commands of King Gehwar, presumed to deny his right to the throne. Pursuing the instructions of his uncle, even Habus Ben Mascan, who had left him in his place when he had departed for Almagreb in the year 420, the governor of Granada sought to enter into alliances with those of Malaga and Carmona, in concert with whom he proposed to act offensively and defensively alike against Seville and Cordova.

All the southern part of Spain, with the islands of Ivica, Majorca, and Minorca, were in the power of the Alameries, who had held the government of those districts from the time of the Hagib Almanzor Muhamad Ben Abi Amer, and of his sons Abdelmelic and Abderahman. During the whole of the civil wars these Alameries had ever remained true to the family of the Omeyas: and when Hayran Alameri was conquered by the King of Cordova, Ben Hamud, who deprived him of his life and state together, a kinsman of Hayran, even Zohair Alameri, who was then Wali of Denia, taking advantage of the civil war, and with the aid of other Alameri generals, had made himself master of Medina Almeria by force of arms.

Now the city was at that time held by the Cadi Mu-

hamad Ben Alcasem Zubeidi of Cairwan, who had obtained the government by favour of the Wali of Seville, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, whom he had essentially served, and whose views he had forwarded effectually at the time when Alcasem Ben Hamud was called King of Cordova. But the Cadi Muhamad Zubeidi, who was a brave and prudent man, was deprived of life at the sanguinary assault and storm by which Zohair the Alameri made his way into Almeria, when Muhamad Ben Alcasim died fighting in defence of the city.

The government of Denia was then given by Zohair the Alameri to Aly Ben Mugihaid, who had received the city of Castillon as an inheritance from his father, Mugihaid Ben Abdallah Mugihaid, called Abu Gaix, who was lord of the islands of Majorca, and in his own states called himself Ameer. He had a daughter married to Muhamad Ben Ismail Ben Abed, Cadi and subsequently King of Seville.

On the islands, Ahmed Ben Raxic Abu Alabas held rule. He came of the Beni Zobeid of Murcia, was a just man, of great learning, was highly esteemed by all the Alameries, and the islands remained peaceably under his command until the day of his death. That event took place in the year 440.

The land of Tadmir was subjected in like manner with Almeria to the obedience of Zohair El Alameri, and was governed by the noble Xeque Abu Becar Ahmed Ben Ishac Ben Zuaid Ben Tahir, of the tribe of Alcaysi, one of the most illustrious Cabilas in Africa. He ruled the land as Alcadem or Prefect, was a just and moderate man, who desired no other title than that of Mudlehim or the Reconciler; and his zeal, with the fidelity which he displayed in the service of the Alamerics when so many were unfaithful to the most sacred obligations, was a beautiful and admirable thing. He was rich and beneficent, which enabled him to do much for the advantage of the State; and the land of Murcia blessed the government of their excellent Xeque. To crown his happiness, Abu Becar possessed a son called Abderahman, who, while still in his youth, was the careful imitator of his father's many virtues.

Valencia, and all her dependencies, which was a large

tract of the best land in Spain, was under the obedience of Abdelazic Abul Hasan Ben Abderahman Ben Abi Amer, Wali of Valencia, who, for his great power and the high nobility of his state, was entitled Ameer and Almanzor, eing the grandson of the great Hagib, Muhamad Almanzor Ben Abdallah Abi Amer. He was a man of such refined policy that he contrived to gain the hearts of all the Alameri generals, more particularly that of Zohair: he was indeed regarded as their chief by all the followers of his father's house, and he ultimately inherited all their possessions. Abdelazic had been Wali and Lord of Valencia from the year 412. The cities of Murbiter and Xatiba were governed for him by Lebun and Mubaric, both Alameri generals; and these being well united with those before mentioned, they all held firmly together, but were greatly disaffected towards the party of Cordova and its new King, Ben Muhamad Gehwar.

In Saragossa, the Ameer and absolute master was Almondar Ben Hud, son of Yahye Ben Husein, of the Ategibies and Giuzamies, illustrious tribes of Arabia. He had made himself Lord of Saragossa, and of almost all Eastern Spain, at the beginning of the civil war, in consequence of a treaty into which he had entered with Hairan the Alameri. He was also Wali of the frontier, where his extraordinary valour and prowess had justly obtained for him the illustrious title of Almanzor. His conduct had secured him the entire confidence of the Kings of Cordova, while his liberality and the prudence of his rule had assured him of the affection of his people. On the election of Gehwar, Almondar Ben Hud Aben Yahye Ben Husein replied promptly to the letters sent him by the king, expressing his good wishes, but he added no word respecting obedience or acknowledgment, and spoke only of defending his frontiers.

In Huesca and its territory the Wali Man Ben Ategibi governed without restraint. He had married Borixa, a daughter of the Hagib Abderahman, son of the renowned Almanzor Muhamad Ben Abi Amer: at a word, all parts of the East and South of Spain were in the power of the Alamerics and Algibies, families united by alliances, marriages, or other connections, which served to form a

powerful bond between those chiefs or kings of districts, who, thus strengthened by the force with which they held together, were far from desiring to pay obedience to the new king of Cordova.

In Lusitania and the Algarve* of Spain, the Beni Alaftas had possessed great power, even from the time when Abdallah Ben Muslamah Alagibi Aben Alaftas of Mekinas had succeeded to the Persian Sabur; which last had been chamberlain to King Alhakem, and in the time of Hixem the Second had been appointed Wali of Alyarac. It was by the Persian general, even Sabur, that the young Abdallah Muhamad Ben Alaftas had been conducted to the frontier; nay, so greatly did Sabur esteem his judgment, that he concluded no important matter without first consulting him, and was entirely guided by his will, bestowing on him many favours, and conferring important characters on his favourite, the government of Merida among others. When Sabur died, which he did in the time of the civil wars, Abdallah Ben Muslamah, who had in some sort become the Wali of that Amelia or district, succeeded the Persian in his command, and then declared himself absolute master of the State of Algarve. He even entitled himself Almanzor, and was so vain of his lordship, that, feeling perfectly assured of its possession, he treated the letters which King Gehwar had written to him, demanding his obedience, with contempt. Nay, Abdallah then declared his son Muhamad, a youth of much promise, to be his future successor.

This self-elected monarch held his court in Badajos; the Alegibies of Tortosa and Huesca were of his kindred, as were also the Aben Hudes of Saragossa; and for this cause Abdallah Ben Muslamah Aben Alaftas was one of the first powerful rulers in Spain.

In Toledo, the Hagib Ismail Ben Dylnun, who called himself Nasroldaula Almudafar, had obtained possession of the city, as well as the mastery of the surrounding Comarcas: he was an illustrious general of great valour, but a man of a proud and ambitious character, aspiring to the sovereignty of all Spain, and pretending that for his high

* Algarve—the West.

nobility, and the long succession of his forefathers, all of whom had held the most important governments of the country, he ought himself to take precedence of all other sovereigns, the Ameers of Cordova and of Seville not excepted.

When Gehwar, therefore, had despatched to the Hagib Ismail Ben Dylnun the letters which demanded his homage and obedience, Ismail had replied with contemptuous haughtiness, telling the king that he must content himself with commanding in that inconsiderable corner which he pretended to hold in Cordova; he added, moreover, that Gehwar need not expect to retain even so much longer than the weak citizens of the place should be content to permit his doing so; but that as for him, Ismail, he acknowledged neither in Spain nor beyond it any other sovereign than the Ruler in Heaven.*

With this powerful prince was connected the lord of Azahila and of Santamaria de Aben Razin, who was called Huceil Ben Chalf Ben Mib Ben Racin, and had inherited the domains of Sahila in the territory of Cordova, with those of Santamaria in the east, which was called, by way of distinction, Santamaria de Aben Razin de Aben Aslai. His family had been masters of those cities since the year 401, the first lord of the same being the Hagib Iz El Daula Abu Muhamad Huceil Ben Racin.

Ismail Ben Dylnun was furthermore protected by Almondar Ben Yahye, and encouraged by the favour of those powerful rulers, whose states bordered on his own, he did not fear to treat the letters of Gehwar Ben Muhamad Ben Gehwar with the contempt we have described; nay, even the menaces of the latter served no other purpose than that of awakening discord and causing the commencement of a new civil war.

The cities of Huelba, Libla, and Gezira Saltis, were in the power of the Yahyes Yahsebis, who had been Walies of Libla from the time when their father Ahmed had made

* "This Ismail Ben Dylnun," remarks M. de Marles, "bore the name of Almamoun among others, and it is under that name that he is frequently mentioned in the Spanish chronicles. The French writers call him Almenon."

himself master of the district, which he had done in the year 410. Of this family, one called Ayoub had been Wali and Alcalde of Cordova in the time of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor; and the whole house had ever maintained its fidelity to the kings of Cordova, doing their best, moreover, to promote peace and concord among the kings of Andalusia.

Santamaria di Algarve, which is the port of Oksonoba on the Western Ocean, was in the power of the Vizier Ahmed Ben Said Abu Giaffar, who had been Alchatib or secretary to Suleiman Almostain Billah, King of Spain. The Vizier Ahmed held the government on the behalf and as the inherited right of his son-in-law Said Ben Haroun Abu Otman of Merida, who subsequently succeeded to his inheritance.

Meanwhile, the lord of Seville, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, pressed each day more closely on Carmona and its Wali Muhamad Ben Abdallah Albarceli: he held the city closely besieged, and reduced it at length to such straits, that Muhamad Ben Abdallah, seeing himself compelled to surrender by the total failure of provisions, determined to save himself from falling into the hands of his enemy, and fled with a few of his followers at the very moment when Carmona was in the act of giving itself up to the troops of Seville. He then retired to Ecija, which was still his own; but not considering himself secure even there, he soon afterwards departed to implore the aid of Edris, King of Malaga. Muhamad also despatched his son on a similar errand to the lord of Zanhaga, who was master of Elvira and Granada, entreating help and favour from him likewise, when that generous ruler came to his aid in person with a select body of cavalry. King Edris of Malaga likewise sent his Vizier Aben Bokina to the succour of Muhamad with an army of considerable strength, both princes fearing much evil to themselves from the ambitious designs of Aben Abed, lord of Seville.

But Aben Abed was, meanwhile, no inactive observer of the preparations thus making against him: he sent his son Ismail with a carefully-chosen body of troops to the encounter of those marching against him in aid of the lord of

Carmona; and Ismail having met those auxiliaries before they had united their forces, defeated both with great good fortune.

When Aben Abed received intelligence of his son's victory, he sent him another company of his most valiant cavaliers, to the end that these, uniting with the troops of Ismail, might enable him to pursue the lord of Zanhaga and the General Aben Bokina; thus continuing his successful operations against those leaders.

The people of Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed proceeded on their mission with so much celerity, that they quickly outmarched the lord of Zanhaga, when he, fearing to be overpowered by superior numbers, and dreading also the advantage which his enemies would derive from having obtained the first success, sent in all haste to the general of Malaga, Aben Bokina, who was but at the distance of an hour's march, exhorting him to advance without fail to his aid, declaring that he would maintain the battle until his arrival, and affirming that if joined by his force he should infallibly secure the predominance.

The troops of Zanhaga and those of Seville encountered each other accordingly with much valour; but when the latter thought only of falling on the banners of Zanhaga, they found themselves unexpectedly assailed by the forces of Aben Bokina, and they, who had believed themselves already conquerors, surprised by the advent of those new enemies, were seized with a panic, and turning rein, they fled the field of battle in great disorder.

The allied forces then made a terrible carnage in their flying ranks; and in that retreat Ismail, the son of Muhamad Aben Abed, lord of Seville, died fighting as a good warrior should do. Those of Malaga then cut off his head, which they sent to the King Edris, who was at that time lying grievously sick in the mountains of Yebaster, but who nevertheless rejoiced greatly in the success thus accorded to his arms.

The news of the misfortune he had sustained in the death of his son and the loss of his troops caused infinite sorrow to the lord of Seville; he feared lest Gehwar of Cordova, taking advantage of that defeat, might turn the occasion to his injury, and that all those acting against him

then working together, they might succeed in effecting his ruin. To attract the populace, therefore, and give a pretext less odious than the mere gratification of his own ambition to the wars and pretensions with which he was afflicting the country, Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed invented the following fiction:—

He pretended to have discovered and set forth among the people that King Hixem Ben Alhakem El Muyad Billah, of whom nothing had been known for a long time previously, had just made his appearance in Calatrava, and affirmed that this unhappy prince had come to him, imploring his assistance; wherefore he declared that the lawful sovereign of them all was now availing himself of his arms for the purpose of reinstating himself on the throne of Spain. The crafty Muhamad Ben Ismail added that he was then entertaining King Hixem as his guest in his Alcazar, and, resolving to serve him as his natural lord, had promised to restore him to his kingdom. He wrote numerous letters containing this false relation to the Xeques and Governors of the provinces, and to the Walies of all the most important cities, whether in Spain or Africa: nor were there wanting some few who were sufficiently credulous to give their belief to that fable; these accordingly assured him of their obedience, and declared themselves in his favour; nay, in some parts the Chotba was made for the King Hixem Ben Alhakem, and Muhamad caused money which bore the name and impress of that sovereign to be coined in the mints of Seville.

It is true that the more intelligent and thoughtful of the Walies despised this invention of Muhamad Ben Ismail's, and paid no regard to the babblings which he had excited among the people; yet the delusion was maintained during some years, until the moon of Muharram, in the year 427, that is to say; and it contributed not a little to the re-establishment of Muhamad Ben Ismail's affairs, and promoted the success of his projects, while it acted as an impediment to those efforts for the maintenance of peace and concord which King Gehwar did not cease to make. Nay, it would appear to be a fatality attached to human affairs, that Fortune seems ever ready to abandon the man of upright intentions, while she follows the triumphal car

of the bold and ambitious evil-doer. Those times were in truth the enemies of virtue and justice: the Walies of all Spain, possessed by a spirit of inordinate covetousness, or by a vain ambition for sovereignty, thought of no other interest than those personal to themselves, and despising all consideration of the common welfare, they paid no regard to the remonstrances and admonitions of their well-intentioned sovereign, the just and beneficent Gehwar.

CHAP. II.—CIVIL WARS AMONG THE MOSLEMAH.

THE army of the allied princes of Malaga, Granada, and Carmona, was now encamped at Alcala, in the territory of Seville, and Muhamad Ben Abdallah the Barzeli had regained once more his city of Carmona, whence he sallied forth with his people to ravage the neighbouring Comarcas: his people laid waste the lands around Seville; nay, these powerful tribes extended their incursions even to the immediate neighbourhood of the city itself, and burning and destroying as they went, did not pause until they had entered Atrayana.

Muhamad Ben Ismail, the lord of Seville, was meanwhile busily gathering the remnants of his host, and by the energy of his character, the extent of his riches, and the renown for valour which was justly due to the general of his cavalry, Ayoub Ben Amer Ben Yahye Yahsebi of Libla, he succeeded in assembling a considerable force. Ayoub Ben Amer Yahsebi defeated the allies in many skirmishes of more or less importance, and eventually drove them beyond the borders of Seville. Malcontent with these reverses, the allied princes then began to accuse each other of the misfortunes they were sustaining, and finally dissolving their union, each man returned to his home.

Now the General Ayoub Ben Amer Yahsebi having rendered this important service to Muhamad Aben Ismail of Seville, believed that he had thereby secured to himself the possession of Huelba and Gezira Saltis, which he held for that ruler, but which he desired to obtain in absolute

sovereignty, and meant to govern independently, in despite of Muhamad Ben Ismail, as did his brother Ahmed Yahsebi in Libla, where he ruled as absolute master, notwithstanding all the opposition made thereto by Aben Alaftas of Badajoz on the one side, and by Muhamad Aben Abed of Seville on the other, both of whom had secretly resolved to render themselves lords of those states.

At this time the King of Malaga, even Edris, who had been long sick, departed to the mercy of Allah, when his General Aben Bokina did all that in him lay to secure the throne for Yahye Ben Edris, known as El Hayan: the Xeques and principal nobles of the city and its Comarcas also concurred in that desire; and the oath of allegiance being proffered to Prince Yahye, he was proclaimed amidst the acclamations of all. But when the news of the death of Edris Ben Aly reached Cebta, the Sclavonian Vizier Naja, who governed there, deputed another Sclavonian general, in whom he confided, to act in his place, and crossing the Strait, he passed over to Malaga with Hacen Ben Yahye Ben Aly, whom he proposed to crown king of that city. It will be remembered that the Sclavonian general had been the guardian from his childhood of that prince, and he retained so complete an empire over him, that he was thus assured of holding both the African and Spanish sovereignties in his own hands.

When Aben Bokina was informed of their debarkation on the shores of Spain, he went forth from the city to meet them with a select force of his bravest cavaliers: the Sclavonian General Naja and the Prince Hacen Ben Yahye were then compelled to retire to the Alcazaba, within which they were admitted by means of the intelligence which they had maintained with the Alcaide of the place. There Aben Bokina instantly besieged them with much vigou- and a restless activity of assault; but the people of Prince Hacen were also full of resolution; they defended themselves with infinite steadiness and bravery; their sallies and the assaults which they delivered in their turn causing very heavy losses to the besiegers.

But the siege continuing with varying success on both sides, the provisions of the besieged began to fail, when the Sclavonian Naja proposed a compromise, which was accepted,

and consisted in the following conditions:—Prince Hacen Ben Yahye was to return in safety to his government in Cebta and Tangier, while Yahye Ben Edris was to be left in the peaceable enjoyment of Malaga, but with the condition that he should accept a rich and eminent merchant, called Axetayfa or Xetayfa, for his Vizier, that person being a man in whom Naja placed much confidence. Thus the Sclavonian and his followers came forth in safety from that siege in which they had endured many privations and could entertain no hope of succours. All the conditions being arranged, Naja then returned with Hacen Ben Yahye to their governments of Cebta and Tangier.

Now Hacen Ben Yahye Ben Aly had married a cousin of his own, called Asafia; she was the daughter of his uncle Edris, the brother of Aly, and from consideration for her, Prince Hacen had refrained from exalting himself to the independent sovereignty of Cebta, as he might have done. But two years after the events above related, the Sclavonian Naja assassinated Prince Hacen his master; not moved by love to the beautiful Asafia, as some writers affirm, but incited, as is maintained with more probability by others, by his desire for the unrestricted possession of the government, on which he at once entered as absolute master. When the intelligence that Hacen had been thus murdered reached Malaga, the King Yahye Ben Edris forwarded messages to all his kindred abjuring them to unite with him for the punishment of that crime. Nor did the assassin Naja remain inactive; gathering whatever forces he could muster, he passed over into Andalusia, in the hope of finding means for sowing discord among those who should assemble against him, and thus neutralizing their alliance. It is affirmed, that before his departure from Cebta he put to death an infant son whom his master Prince Hacen had left behind; but others declare that the child died of sickness. God alone knows the truth.

As Wali over Cebta and Tangier the traitor Naja left Merubad Bihi Ben Aleslabi; and as the Sclavonian had long and maturely meditated the wicked enterprise on which he was bound, he bestowed double pay on the great body of cavalry which he had raised for the purpose, and now took

with him, hoping thereby to secure the fidelity of those troops with the concurrence of their officers in his ambitious designs.

Having passed the Strait with a powerful fleet, he at once succeeded in obtaining possession of the two fortresses of Malaga, with its Alcazar, which he entered by surprise, and with the aid of the intelligence which he had found means to establish and maintain with the Vizier Xetayfa. The Sclavonian general then shut up King Edris as a prisoner in his own chamber, thinking of nothing less than assassinating him as he had done Prince Hacen, and thus rendering himself master of all the territories held by the allied Alhacenes in Spain, as he had obtained those they owned in Africa. The merchant Xetayfa, with his riches and authority, gave Naja most valuable aid in these his intentions, supplying his people with abundance of provisions and enabling him to continue the double pay he had offered not only to the people of Barbary who had accompanied him, but also to such other vagabonds and broken men as now came flocking to join his force.

The news of these violent proceedings did not fail to reach Algezira, when Muhamad Ben Alcasem at once assembled his troops for the rescue of his kinsman Edris, and to proceed against the traitorous Sclavonian Naja. The latter then set forth a rumour to the effect that Muhamad was coming, not for the deliverance of Edris, but to make himself master of the city; and sallying forth with his people, he prepared to give battle to the advancing troops. He had not gone far, when certain Xeques who were in his company, but were in secret disaffected to his interests and did not serve him in good faith, but were in fact desirous of his ruin, advised him to return to the city and there await the arrival of his enemies, whom he might then easily overcome, or, failing this, might send to Cebta and Tangier for an increase of force; while if he then risked a battle, he must throw all on the chances of the result. To this Naja replied that he would return as they advised, but with a few of his followers only, and for the arrangement of an affair which was of the highest importance, leaving the greater part of his force to encounter the enemy, or at least to keep him in check.

But the true purpose of that false traitor was to take the life of Edris and of all such as he believed likely to remain faithful to their king, and with this intention he was in fact hurrying to return to Malaga, when he was himself encountered on the way by certain of the Andalusian Xeques and some generals of Edris, who had not deserted their lord in heart, although they had left the city with the host of Naja. These men followed close on the traces of the intended murderer, until they had come to a hollow way better known to the Xeques of Malaga than to the African stranger, and which the former had reached by a shorter road than that pursued by the latter; then taking advantage of the difficulties presented by the pass, they surrounded the small body in attendance on the traitor Naja, when they cut the Sclavonian, with ten of his cavaliers, to pieces. That done, two of their number rode hastily to Malaga, when they entered the city, crying, "Albricias, Albricias!"*—Victory, victory! They thus aroused the people, who took their King Yahye Ben Edris from his prison, and bringing him forth to the streets, proclaimed him anew amidst universal rejoicings.

The treacherous Xetayfa was hewn to morsels by the knives of the enraged multitude; nay, all his kindred and partizans were in danger of the same fate, but King Yahye Ben Edris succeeded in pacifying the people and avoiding that effusion of blood, while at the same time he saved the lives of all the other Sclavonians then in Malaga, and who were equally threatened by the populace.

Made acquainted with the death of their leader Naja, the host of that Sclavonian general hastened to disperse;—many passed over into Africa, and escaped; others attached themselves to the service of Muhamad Ben Alcasim of Algezira, offering to become his vassals, and fight against whomever he might assail; wherefore Muhamad Ben Alcasim himself receiving intelligence of all that had occurred from his kinsman Yahye Ben Edris, recalled the

* "Albricias, Albricias!" These words imply "Reward me, for I bring good news!" They are nearly equivalent to the old French "Largesse," and are still used in Spain—(but now jestingly)—by such as bring pleasant intelligence.—*Trans.*

troops he had sent to aid the latter named prince, and remained quietly in Algezira.

These events destroyed all those hopes of peace and unity which had been conceived by King Gehwar of Cordova, who, to his great sorrow, beheld the flames of discord and civil war extending themselves more and more widely in every direction. The paternal kindness of his counsels and admonitions to those contentious spirits thus destroying the peace of the realm was of no avail, and neither his gentle persuasions nor the excellence of his reasons produced the effect that should have resulted from them: the ambition of some among the Amirs, and the covetousness of others, with the eager thirst for rule and gain of the Walies and Alcaides, rendered all insensible to the voice of justice—none regarded the common welfare, absorbed as they were in short-sighted considerations of what they believed to be their personal interest. Where violence could find no place, there they prevailed by means of a pretended liberality, attracting the people, more especially those of the lowest classes, by the promise of pretended advantage, and gaining over others by various subterfuges such as each man thought suited to those with whom he treated.

Thus was Spain divided and oppressed by as many kings as there were provinces; and with the clamour of their arms, the cries of their partizans, and the tumults of their discord, these leaders prevented the voice of the just and beneficent King of Cordova from being heard in the land.

Becoming convinced, therefore, that his mild persuasions were unavailing, Gehwar attempted to subdue his nearest and most troublesome neighbours by force of arms. He first sent his general with a select body of cavalry to occupy the Comarcas of Azahila, which were held as his own domains by Huzam Daula Ben Huzeil Aben Razin, lord of another territory in Santamaria of the east, which received the name of Santamaria de Aben Razin. When the troops of Cordova had taken possession of some of his strong places, Husam Daula entreated the aid of his neighbour, Ismail Ben Dylnoun, lord of Toledo, who instantly

took the defence and protection of Husam Daula Ben Huzeil Abu Muhamad, known also as Aben Aslay, into his own charge.

Assembling an immense host accordingly, he sent that force against the troops of Cordova, whom they quickly drove from the fortresses, and reoccupied every place belonging to the lord of Azahila. This they did with the greater facility because Husam Daula was much beloved by his people, whose hearts he had won by his affability and kindly treatment of them, insomuch that all raised their voices against the people of Cordova on that occasion.

About this time, Almondar Ben Yahye Ben Hud, King of Saragossa, one of the four principal Ameers then aspiring to the sovereignty of Spain, had repaired to Granada for the purpose of concerting an alliance with Habuz Ben Maksun, lord of that city and of Elvira, as well as of Jaen. Here Almondar remained some short time to await the assemblage of troops which were to be led forth in his favour by his kinsman Abdallah Ben Alhakem; but certain well-founded suspicions which that general conceived of his purpose, caused Abdallah himself to assassinate his relation, the King of Saragossa,—an event which took place on the 10th day of the moon of Dylhagia, in the year 430.

The news of that death was presently taken to Saragossa, and on the same day the son of Almondar, Zuleiman Ben Almondar Ben Hud, lord of Lerida, was proclaimed king in the city of Saragossa and in its Comarcas. Zuleiman Ben Almondar was an excellent prince, justly meriting eternal fame for the splendour of his prowess: he was called Abu Ayoub Ben Muhamad Almondar and Almostain Billah, and began his reign in that part of eastern Spain during the moon of Muharram, which was the first of the year of the Hegira 431.

Abu Ayoub Zuleiman Ben Almondar Ben Mohamad Ben Hud, called Almostain Billah, was Sahib or lord of Lerida, as hath been said, and to that territory he united the domains of Zarcusta* and its Comarcas after the death of his father, Almondar Ben Yahye Ategibi, whose head had been cut off in his palace, as hath been related above, by his

* Saragossa.

cousin Abdallah Ben Alhakem, in the moon of Dylhagia of the year 430, when Aben Hud was proclaimed. But at a later period the people of Zarcusta, which is Saragossa, rose up against him, when he took refuge in Rot-Alyud, an inaccessible castle, to which he had removed his treasures. The despoiled Alcazar* of Zarcusta was thus left desolate during two years, seeing that Aben Hud had carried off even to the marble incrustations which had decorated the walls; nay, the whole edifice would have been ruined, had not the rapid succession of Zuleiman Ben Hud, which took place in Muharram of the next year, interposed to prevent that misfortune.†

Now about this time, Muhamad Ben Yahye, Wali of Huesca, repaired to Valencia, where he was received with much distinction by Abdelaziz Abul Hasan Ben Abi Amer, who was lord of that city and its territory; nay, Abdelaziz gave two daughters of his own in marriage to two of the sons of the Wali of Huesca, one of whom was called Abulhuas Man, the other Samida Abu Otba. The festivities and rejoicings for these marriages being concluded, the Wali Muhamad Aben Yahye departed for the east; but he had not long embarked, before there came intelligence of his death, he having been drowned in the sea.

About the same period it was that the Sclavonian Zohair Alameri, lord of Almeria and of a large district in the south of Spain, fell sick unto death, and of that malady he did in fact expire in the year 432. Now Zohair had declared the lord of Valencia, even Abdelaziz Abul Hasan, who was called Almanzor, the successor to all his land and lordships, and that prince appointed his son-in-law, Man Abulhuas, to be his Prefect and Naib in Almeria, where he governed the state with much prudence; being greatly beloved by his people: Abulhuas Maur soon established himself in an independent sovereignty, which he held during his whole life-

* Alcazar—the royal palace.

† In this passage we have an instance of the change of orthography in names which occasionally results from the various MSS. of Arabian writers used by our author in the course of his work: the number of the authorities consulted has also led him once or twice into the repetition of an event previously related, an inadvertence of which the reader will perceive an instance in line eleven of the page before us.—*Trans.*

time, ruling his domains with infinite wisdom and with much consideration for all parties.

The lord of Seville, meanwhile, perceiving that his enemies had dissolved their alliance against him, no longer cared to avail himself of the false relation which he had invented as respected the pretended discovery of King Hixem the Second; but still determining to profit by his fable, he now published an intimation to the effect that the king had died, but had left certain letters, which he produced, wherein he, Muhamad Aben Ismail, was himself declared the successor of that sovereign, and the avenger of his wrongs.

These inventions availed but little with the great and powerful, who gave them no credence; but among the people they were not without their effect, and secured Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed much importance among the Alameries, with whom even the traditions and shadows of that power and authority so long held by the Omeyas were still sacred and beloved: thus almost all the people dwelling in the southern parts of Spain declared themselves the partizans of Aben Abed, lord of Seville, with whom they maintained intelligence, either secret or avowed.

In the year 432 there was born to Aben Abed a grandson who was the offspring of his son the Prince Muhamad and the Princess of Denia, the daughter of the Ameer Mugiahid Abul Gaix, lord of Majorca and Denia. This birth was observed by the astrologers acting under the orders of the infant's grandfather, and they reported that the planetary positions announced much greatness and prosperity; but that, towards the end of his days, the full moon of that newly-born child's fortune would not only decrease, but must suffer a notable eclipse.

A year after the birth of his grandson, the King Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed was about to set forth against his enemies with a large body of cavalry, when the all-powerful hand of Allah impeded his steps by means of a great sickness, from the severity of which he died during the last night of the moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 433,* when he was transported from the Alcazars of Seville to

* A.D. 1043.

those of Paradise.* The death of this Ameer was deeply deplored in all his territories, seeing that he was endowed with many qualities which are excellent in kings. His son Muhamad Aben Abed, who was called Almoateded, was proclaimed on the second day of Giumada Postrera.

This prince was of singularly beautiful person, but was the slave of his passions, and as cruel as he was voluptuous: even in the time of his father he maintained a precious harem of seventy slaves, exquisite in beauty, selected from different countries, and obtained at immense cost: these were supported with extraordinary profusion and prodigality. Aben Hayan relates that Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Ismail Aben Abed no sooner saw himself exalted to be absolute king, than he extended his harem to the number of eight hundred damsels, all entertained for his own delight. Yet he doated on the daughter of Mugehaid Alameri with a never-failing love. Her father was the lord of Castillon, and she was sister to Aly Ben Mugihaid, Prince of Denia, the prudent Muhamad Ben Ismail having sought that alliance for his son, in the hope of assuring to him the devotion of the Alameries, which he did in part much increase by his connection with the Princess of Denia.

Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail, called Almoateded, wrote elegant verses, which were gathered into a collection by the son of his brother Ismail, which last named prince died in battle, as before related. He was somewhat tainted with impiety, or at the least had obtained the reputation of being but slightly attached to his religion, and in all the five-and-twenty fortresses of his lordship, he caused but one Aljama, with one sole Alminbar, to be erected; but, on the other hand, he gave command that a most beautiful palace of pleasure should be constructed in Ronda, and placed therein such a train of servants as sufficed to maintain it in perpetual readiness for his use.

In the Alcazar of Seville this prince assembled, within a magnificent recess, a rich treasure of singular and beautifully decorated cups, garnished with gold and jacinth, emeralds and rubies; the bowls of these cups were made from the

* Adel Halim affirms, on the contrary, that Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, whom he calls Cadi of Seville, died in the year of the Hegira 431.—*Condé.*

skulls of such great personages, his enemies, as he had destroyed with his own hand and sword, or of such among the foes of their house as had been decapitated by his father. In this strangely furnished cabinet was the skull of the Ameer Yahye Ben Aly, with that of the Hagib Aben Hasoun, and that of Aben Chong; to say nothing of the many others which the cruelty of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Almoatahed was continually adding to the number.

At the end of the year 434 died the Wali of Santamaria, of Oksonoba, in the Algarve: he was called Said Ben Haroun, and his office was inherited by his son, Muhamad Ben Said.

CHAP. III.—Of the death of Gehwar, king of Cordova, and succession of his son, Muhamad Ben Gehwar, and of the continuance of the war between the Moslemah chieftains.

Although the events of the contest into which the King of Cordova had entered with the Lord of Azahila, and his protector, Ismail Ben Dylnoun, King of Toledo, were not very prosperous, yet the people of Cordova made every possible effort in the service of their lord, offering themselves cheerfully to the perils of that sanguinary and infelicitous war, in consideration of the benefits which they had enjoyed under his wise and beneficent government, and from a conviction of the perfect justice of all his intentions. They felt, moreover, that if by the hard necessities of warfare they were exposed to a needful and honourable danger on their frontiers, yet in their homes they now lived in the highest security and quietude, every man reposing in the midst of the most perfect abundance and good order when he had once returned from the field to the happiness of his abode, as if in times of absolute peace. They did not cease to bless the name of their excellent ruler therefore, calling him the father of his people and the defender of the state. At a word, he was beloved and respected by all; but when in the whole land there was no fear more pressing than the fear of his death, the event thus dreaded happened, and

he was recalled to the mercies of Allah. Some say that Gehwar's death took place in the night of Giuma,* the 6th day of the moon Muharram, others in the moon of Safer, in the year 435.

The funeral solemnities of King Gehwar were accompanied by the tears of all who dwelt in Cordova, and even the damsels who had retired into solitude accompanied his bier with the precious drops of a sincere grief falling from their eyes. These mournful ceremonies concluded, the son of their lamented sovereign, even Muhamad Ben Gehwar Abul Walid, was proclaimed king by the still grieving people. He was a quiet and good man, the worthy son of so good a father, but of infirm condition and very weak health. He received the oath of obedience readily proffered by the Aljama and Mexuar of Cordova, and the sorrow felt for the loss of his father was at length somewhat tempered by the hopes justly founded on the excellencies of the son; but the times were grievously trying, and altogether adverse to the pacific virtues which shone so resplendently in those good kings.

No sooner had Muhamad Ben Gehwar mounted the throne than he proposed a truce to the King of Toledo and the Lord of Azahila; not hoping for any very prosperous result from a struggle with enemies so potent: but as those rulers replied with a contemptuous haughtiness, the King of Cordova committed the continuation of the war to his son Walid and to the General Hariz Ben Alhakem Ben Alcasha. The latter was then serving on the frontier near Calatrava, but he hastened to assemble his forces, and made numerous incursions on the dominions of his opponents, to whose land he carried the extremity of desolation.

In this year of 436, there died, in his city of Denia, the Ameer Mugiahid, Lord of Majorca, father-in-law of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville.

Zuleyman Ben Almondar Aben Hud, King of Zaragoza, was meanwhile engaged in a conflict with the Christians on the eastern frontier of Spain, and towards the country of France. This warfare he maintained with infinite constancy, performing deeds of indescribable valour, and causing heavy

* Or Juma, the Mahomedan Sabbath, answering to our Friday.

loss to the enemies of the faith. He recovered all the fortresses of Bardania, but when most earnestly occupied by that sacred war, and the exaltation of Islam, Zuleyman Ben Almondar Abeer Hud was recalled to the mercies of Allah. He died crowned by numerous triumphs, when the Lord did without doubt bestow the due recompense of his heroic deeds in those ineffable delights which are reserved for the better life. He departed from this world in the year 438, and his son Ahmed Abu Giafar, called Almuctadar, was proclaimed in his place: that prince was a zealous imitator of his father's virtues, and his love for our holy religion kept him in continual wars, where he proved himself to be a brave and very fortunate leader.

The King Aben Abed of Seville, called Almoatahed, likewise continued the war which his father had commenced against the Lord of Carmona, even Muhamad El Barceli, and against the allies of Muhamad, even the rulers of Malaga and Granada: frequent encounters took place between the troops of either side, each making incursions on the territories of the other, and all causing much suffering to the people, whose crops they cut to pieces, whose flocks they drove away, and whose persons they carried into captivity. The injuries inflicted on the unfortunate inhabitants of the country were therefore constant, but in every other respect the fortunes of that war were infinitely various, and victory declared now for the one side and now for the other.

In a different part of the land events were of much the same character: the King of Toledo, perceiving that the Generals of Cordova made perpetual incursions on his territory, and caused grievous havoc to his subjects, resolved to make a powerful effort, and retaliate on the lands of Cordova by a fearful invasion; he therefore wrote to his Alcaydes, to his son-in-law, Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, and to the Wali of the latter, Abu Amer Ben Alferag, who was then holding the government of Conca, for the Lord of Valencia, all of whom he required to send him troops collected from the people of Xeiba, Alarcon, and Conca, to the end that he might make an effectual incursion on the territory of Cordova. He furthermore concerted treaties with the Christians of Gallicia and Castille, to the intent that being thus the more completely disemb..i-

rassed of other enemies, he might act with the greater effect in the war on which he then proposed to enter.

In reply to the letters thus sent, Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, wrote to his son, advising him not to refuse the assistance demanded by the King of Toledo, and to all his Alcaydes he sent messages to the same effect, commanding them to assemble their forces, and go forth in the company of Abdelmelic. These alliances were formed in the year 440, and with the powerful host thus obtained the King of Toledo made incursions on the territory of Cordova, defeating Hariz Ben Alhakem, the general of king Muhamad, in numerous conflicts, and occupying many of the fortresses along the whole line of the frontier, while the valiant Hariz no longer dared to retaliate on the lands of Toledo, and could do nothing better than avoid a battle by whatever stratagem he could devise for that purpose.

And now, as Muhamad Ben Gehwar, King of Cordova, saw clearly that he could not long resist the forces of so powerful an enemy, he also endeavoured to form alliances among his neighbours, by whose aid he might hope to restrain the boldness of Dylnoun, King of Toledo: he therefore wrote to the King of Seville, Muhamad Aben Abed Abu Amru, called also Almoatehed, entreating him to be his friend in that straight, and unite with him against the King of Toledo, since it was not the liberties of Cordova alone which were then placed in jeopardy, but those of every State in Andalucia. To these letters and messages the King of Seville, even Abu Amru Muhamad Aben Abed, replied, declaring that he desired nothing more earnestly than the friendship of the King of Cordova, whose son, Abdelmelic Walid, well knew, as he added, how much he was beloved by the ruler of Seville. That crafty prince said furthermore that Muhamad Ben Gehwar might therefore count on his good-will, although he could do but little to serve him at present, being himself so much embarrassed by the many enemies with whom he had to contend, and who kept him continually employed, but he concluded by the assurance that he would certainly send him some aid, although not to such effect as he could desire.

At this reply the King of Cordova rejoiced greatly, and despatched letters to the Lord of Algarve, Aben Alaftas,

requesting him also to be his ally, and send him aid against his enemies. The generosity of Aben Alaftas was made clearly manifest on that occasion, and he proposed that a triple alliance should be formed between the King of Cordova, Muhamad Aben Gehwar, on the one hand, and himself, united with Muhamad Aben Aben, called Almoatehed and Abu Amru, King of Seville, on the other, giving full power to the Vizier Ayoub Ben Amer El Yahsebi of Libla to confirm all the conditions thereof in his name.

The Viziers commissioned to that effect assembled in Seville accordingly, and after various discussions the treaty of alliance was concluded in the Moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 443, each power assuring the aid and reciprocal defence of his States to the other, against whomsoever should attempt to oppress the liberties of the people of Andalucia, without prejudice to the particular interests of either government, and leaving untouched whatever claims might reciprocally arise between them, either at that time or on any future occasion.

And now, as in this assembly the Xeques and principal rulers of the whole district had all concurred, the Lords of Libla, Huelba, Gezire-Saltis, for example, with Muhamad Ben Said, Lord of Santamaria de Algarve and of Oksonoba, so did these all claim to be considered as forming a part of the confederation, and each demanded to be acknowledged as a sovereign power. The Vizier Ayoub Ben Amer El Yahsebi, who was of the illustrious family known by that appellation, supported this pretension, but it was opposed by Abu Amru Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville, who declared that those rulers were but captains or leaders who held their governments from himself at a tenancy and personal fief for their lives only; that being, as they were, his vassals, he would not consent to see them stand forward in his presence as kings of provinces. He added that his father had granted those governments only for life, although after the death of Ahmed Yahsebi, in the year 433, he had been succeeded by Abdelaziz Yahsebi and his brothers, yet it was in the same quality alone; wherefore he would not now admit them to be considered as absolute masters of the States in question. And from that moment the Lord of Seville did in fact resolve to recover those portions of ter-

ritory, and restore them, either by agreement or force of arms, to his states.

Aben Alaftas, Lord of Algarve, remained but poorly satisfied with the conditions agreed on, nor was the King of Cordova much better pleased, seeing that everything was arranged to the advantage of Seville; but the necessity which the last-named sovereign was then placed in of such assistance as his powerful neighbour alone could render, compelled him to conceal his dissatisfaction. The manner of Aben Abed had been meanwhile exceedingly courteous towards the ambassadors of Badajoz, Algarve, and Cordova, nor was he less obliging to the Xeques who had joined the assembly, yet they all departed with a certain doubt as to the sincerity of his professions, and each feeling much better pleased with his liberality than assured of his good faith.

In the year 443 died Maun Alahuas, Lord of Almeria, who was succeeded in the command by his son, Abu Yahye Muhamad Ben Maun, the father having caused him to receive the oath of allegiance as his successor before he had fully accomplished his eighteenth year. This youth was furthermore called Moez-Daula; he had been treated as a sovereign from the moment that the oath of allegiance had been proffered to him, and in his proclamation he was entitled Almoatesim Billah and Aluatic Bifadlada, with other august appellations in the manner of the Caliphs of the East.

The young monarch of Almeria was endowed with singular beauty of person and an equal exaltation of mind: prudent, liberal, and virtuous, he gained the hearts both of rich and poor: his fine qualities attracted all the sages of the East of Africa, and of various countries in Europe, to his court, where he honoured and favoured them beyond what was then done by any other king of his time. He devoted one day in each week to the entertainment and conversation of the wise men who were his chosen companions, and gave the renowned poet Aba Abdallah Ben Alhedad apartments in his Alcazar, as he did also to Ben Ibada, to Ben Bolita, and to Aben Malic, all men who were distinguished in those days for the brilliancy of their genius.

Abu Yahye Muhamad Ben Maun, called Moez Daula, had scarcely been seated on his throne when he had to maintain a

war with his brother, Somida Abu Otabi, who presumed to question his right to the sovereignty. But Somida could make no progress towards the accomplishment of his wishes, and far from being able to take his brother's place, he was compelled to resign himself to contentment with his more humble lot; nay, he had ultimately to implore the mercy of that good brother, who always treated him well and caused him to live very honourably in his court, notwithstanding the wrong which he had suffered at his hands.

Aben Maun, called Moez Daula, connected himself with the Walies of Denia, by a marriage with the daughter of Mugihaid Alameri, to whom he gave a daughter of his own in marriage. This last-mentioned princess was a lady of great beauty and discretion.

Meanwhile, the King of Seville, by way of performing his part of the treaties entered into as above related, despatched a body of five hundred horse, commanded by Omar of Oksonoba, to aid the King of Cordova against his enemy, the King of Toledo. The lord of Huelba and Saltis also, Abu Zeid Abdelaziz Albecri, with Ahmed Aben Yahye Yahsebi, lord of Libla, and Muhamad Ben Said, lord of Obsonoba and of Santamaria in Algarve, although highly offended by Aben Abed King of Seville, likewise offered themselves as auxiliaries of Muhamad Ben Gehwar King of Cordova. They sent a certain force of cavalry, which united with the troops despatched from Badajoz, and all then passed together into the territories of Cordova.

Then the King of Seville thought the occasion a favourable one for reclaiming the tenures or fiefs which were held by Abu Zeid Abdelaziz: he therefore despatched his son with a carefully-chosen body of cavalry to effect that purpose. Abu Zeid, perceiving that he had not the means of resisting the son of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, then gave up the city of Libla on certain conditions, and taking with him his treasures and most important valuables, he departed to Gezira Saltis.

Yet as Aben Abed had taken possession of Huebla likewise, Abdelaziz did not consider himself secure in Gezira Saltis, and the less so as he was informed that the people of the island had intelligence with those of Seville, and had made a compact with them to effect his downfall. Things

being thus, he passed over to a very strong tower which was erected in the midst of the water flowing around the island, whither he transported his treasures, and to which place he was accompanied by the most trusted members of his household. But there Abdelaziz was at once besieged by his enemies, who kept so close a watch, that no boat could approach the tower with provisions for its inhabitants. Abdelaziz, therefore, now endeavoured to escape secretly from the cruel and tyrannous Aben Abed, who would grant him no conditions of surrender, but desired that he should place himself unreservedly in his power, and now took every possible measure for preventing his receiving aid from any hand, or procuring a ship by which he might have crossed the sea.

By great care and with much secrecy, Abdelaziz did nevertheless obtain a bark, for which he paid ten thousand doubloons of gold, and in that vessel he escaped from the tower by night, with his family and the most precious of his treasures. He then followed the coast for some time, and disembarked at a good distance, when he went wandering as a fugitive through the territory of Bazal until informed that men were pursuing him by order of the King of Seville, and that his person was in imminent danger. In that straight Abdelaziz addressed himself to the lord of Carmona, who sent him horses to aid his flight, and after having entertained him for some days in his palace, then supplied him with the means of travelling and a sufficient escort, by the help of which he might repair to Cordova or Toledo, where he hoped to remain in greater security.

Abdelaziz next betook himself to Mahomad Aben Gehwar of Cordova, who received him very cordially, as the nobleness and loyalty of Abdelaziz had well merited that he should do. The men of that illustrious family to which Abdelaziz belonged had indeed been ever true and faithful servants of the kings of Spain in all times, and had given them many proofs of devotion during the flourishing period of the Omeyas.

In the year 444, the Infant of Seville, even Muhamad Aben Abed, son of the reigning king, completed the conquest of Gezira Saltis, having done which, he passed on to take the city of Oksonoba and its port of Santamaria de

Algarve, both of which he brought to submission: that district was then possessed by Muhamad Ben Said, who held it by right of inheritance, as he did Xilbe, which was one of its dependencies.

Here there came to the Infant a noble youth called Muhamad Aben Omar Ben Huseim Almahri of the commune of Xombos, near Xilbe. He was remarkably beautiful in person, endowed with a brilliant genius, and a good poet; he also possessed much learning, and as all these qualities were keenly appreciated by the Prince of Seville, who yielded to few in the accomplishments of the mind, he caused the youth to accompany him to the capital, where the rich endowments with which Aben Omar had been gifted were acknowledged by the King Aben Abed also, who soon took him into his favour. And this was the commencement of the great confidence with which Aben Omar was subsequently honoured by the sovereigns of Seville; from that time he had opportunities for the manifestation of those abilities which have rendered him celebrated both in Spain and beyond that country.

The King of Seville, Muhamad Aben Abed, then gave the tenancy of Libla as a fief to the general of his cavalry, Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, but with the express remark, that he conferred it on him not because his father Abdelaziz had held it as his own, but for his good services. And it was in fact a well-merited reward, seeing that the zeal and loyalty of Abdallah towards his lord the King of Seville were such as to induce him to make an active and earnest war even on the lord of Carmona, whom he besieged in that very city, within which his fugitive and persecuted father had but a short time previously been generously and hospitably received; nay, Abdallah did so closely invest the place, that the inhabitants, wearied with the labours of resistance, and no longer able to suffer the many privations to which they were subjected, began to treat for the surrender of their city, declaring that they were not willing to die of hunger for a master who had proved himself unable to defend them.

These declarations, and the purpose they implied, reached the ears of the lord of Carmona, Mohamad El Barceli, and

departing secretly from the city by night, he fled to Malaga. This flight the inhabitants of Carmona soon discovered, when they at once surrendered the fortress, and declared themselves the vassals of Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail, called Almuatedid Aben Abed, King of Seville.

When Muhamad Ben Abdallah El Barceli, lord of Carmona, arrived in Malaga, he implored the aid of Edris Ben Yahye, who received him as his good friend, and at once began to gather forces of horse and foot to give him the assistance he required; whereupon El Barceli departed for Ecija, which still remained his own, and having there assembled his cavalry, he joined the host provided by Edris, when both together they set forth against the troops of Seville.

But Aben Abed would not accept the offer of battle, and they could bring him only to insignificant skirmishes, in which the brave men of both sides fought with varying fortune. Yet El Barceli found it impossible to recover the city of Carmona, which was his chief intent; and after many conflicts of more or less importance, King Edris returned to Malaga, while El Barceli retired to his city of Ecija.

But scarcely had Edris Ben Yahye reposed himself from the fatigues of that expedition, when he was compelled again to sally forth in aid of his friend and ally, Habus of Sanhaga, lord of Granada, from whom he received intelligence of the plots formed against them both by Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville, the success of which was promoted to the utmost of their power by all the kinsmen and partizans of that crafty sovereign. Habus of Sanhaga furthermore warned his friend to beware of Muza Ben Afan, who, though apparently a faithful servant, was in fact in the interest of his enemies, and maintained a constant intelligence with the King of Seville. To this latter part of his friend's intelligence King Edris replied by sending Muza Ben Afan with letters to his court, and in these letters he exhorted Habus to reward the bearer as his services merited; when the lord of Granada, perfectly understanding his correspondent's intent, caused the head of Muza Ben Afan to be struck off immediately; that done, he

replied to the letters of Edris by assuring him that Muza had already received the appropriate reward of his loyalty and truth.

But Muza Ben Afan was the cousin of Muhamad Ben Edris, lord of Algezira, as well as of Edris Ben Yahye, king of Malaga; and when the former was made acquainted with his kinsman's death, he at once disposed his measures for taking vengeance for the same. With that intent, he availed himself of the absence of Edris, who had departed from his capital, repairing to the aid of Habus, and was then in the neighbourhood of Ronda, where his friend was engaged in daily conflict with the troops of Seville, led on by the Infant Muhamad Aben Abed.

Choosing his opportunity, therefore, Muhamad of Algezira advanced with a powerful army against Malaga, the greater part of his force consisting of African Negroes. He entered the city without resistance, and being there joined by the Negroes who formed the guard of the Alcazaba, these last enthroned Muhamad Ben Edris in the palace, and he was there proclaimed King of Malaga by those Negro troops.

But the people of Malaga, by whom their sovereign was much esteemed and beloved, would not permit him to be thus deprived of his throne: they took arms against the Negroes, whom they compelled to shut themselves up in the Alcazaba, which the blacks then fortified and defended with much bravery. The men of Malaga next formed a great encampment, and besieged the fortress very closely; but desiring nothing more than to rid themselves of those who had thus seized the throne, they proposed favourable conditions to the Negroes, many of whom passed over in effect to their camp, while those who remained, perceiving that their numbers were daily diminishing, while they had not the means of replacing those deserters, no longer dared to make sallies on the Malagan defences.

The people of Malaga took care to inform their king of what was doing in his capital, and Edris returned without delay, bringing with him an increase of force, and pressing the siege of his Alcazar with the utmost earnestness. He offered the security of their lives to all such of the Negroes as should then surrender themselves to his mercy, but

threatened with inevitable destruction whomsoever he should find in the palace when once he had entered it by force of arms. By these threats and promises, Edris induced the Negroes to quit the fortress, and they all fled by night through a deep fosse, when Muhamad of Algezira, perceiving himself to be abandoned by his followers, resigned his fate to the hands of his cousin, nothing doubting but that the latter would condemn him to immediate death: but Edris spared his life, commanding him merely to depart from Spain and repair to his stronghold of Hisn Airache, where Mohamad had secured his treasures, and where his daughter was already awaiting him; the whole household and family of the baffled usurper was in like manner permitted to depart with him in all security.

Edris then secured himself in the possession of Algezira, and having freed his hands of the troubles and difficulties with which his enemies had beset him, he passed over into Africa, where he instantly occupied the cities of Tangier and Cebta. Such of the Negroes as desired to take service with him he incorporated with his army left in Spain, but all who did not desire to remain in that country he permitted to depart for their homes.

When Edris had been some short time in Africa, the Albarguetine Sclavonians, Razikala and Sekan, who had been governors of Cebta and Tangier, did their utmost to cause him new disquietudes; but the people, who abhorred those rulers for their covetousness, cruelty, and oppression, were far from taking part in their projects: instead of favouring their intentions, they betrayed them publicly, and accusing them before the king, even Edris, they said to him, "Muley, these Sclavonians who accompany and surround thee are traitors, who pretend to be serving thee, but are in truth of a false and disloyal heart; they are contriving thy downfall, and have formed conspiracies against thy life, but do thou suffer us to reward them as their perfidy merits."

King Edris would have examined into the truth of these allegations, but before he could take any steps for that purpose, the rage of the people, long restrained, broke forth against those their tyrants; nor was it possible to liberate the unhappy men from their fierce and terrible hands.

They dragged their victims from the presence of the king, and a few minutes later were found to have hewed them into a hundred pieces.

No long time after this event, King Edris returned to Andalusia, taking with him his younger son, but leaving the elder in Africa as his Wali for Cebta and Tangier.

In the year 452 died Abdelaziz Almanzor, King of Valencia, when he was succeeded by his son Abderahman Ben Abdelaziz, who was son-in-law to the King Dylnoun of Toledo, and called himself Almudafar. It was much against his will that he had sent his people to take part in the wars of Andalusia, but being commanded to do so by the authority of his father, as we have related above, he could not refuse to obey while that sovereign was in life.

CHAP. IV.—OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE KINGS OF TOLEDO AND CORDOVA, AND OF THE DARK TREACHERY COMMITTED BY THE KING OF SEVILLE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF OBTAINING ACCESS TO CORDOVA.

ISMAIL Ben Dylnoun Ben Ahmed, King of Toledo, entered the territories of Cordova with a very powerful host, and defeated the troops of Muhamad, King of Cordova, as well as those sent him from Seville and Badajoz, in many encounters, finally putting them to a total rout in a sanguinary battle which was fought on the banks of the river Algodor, or Water of the Surprises,—so called from the many statagems and deceits which had been practised by the experienced generals who had led the opposing armies in that struggle.

The forces of Cordova were commanded by Hariz Ben Alhakem Alcasha, one of the most valiant generals in Andalusia. The battle continued through the whole day, and the conquerors, who were those of Toledo, Valencia, and the land of Azahila united, pursued their retreating enemies even to the mountains that border on the Campagna of Cordova.

The news of this defeat carried dismay into the Mezuar or council of the King of Cordova, while they caused heavy fears in the city, and brought confusion to the face of the

hitherto thoughtless Prince Abdelmelic, who, instead of marching in the front of his father's troops, was amusing himself in all security amidst the delicious gardens of Medina Azahra, where he passed his hours in casting the Gereed with the youths of Cordova, who were his companions, and thought only of his sports. But the above described intelligence infused anxiety even into his heart: and the sportive Gereed was changed for the lance of war. The face of all things in the country appeared to suffer change,—the people themselves began to resign their spades and sickles for the sword of combat; and Prince Abdelmelic departed to Seville, there to entreat the further and immediate aid of Mohamad Ben Mohamad Ben Ismail Almoatedid Aben Abed, to whom he did not fail to represent the urgency of the danger which was indeed menacing the head and heart of the state.

The King of Seville, who, though but of equal years with Prince Abdelmelic, was an astute and crafty man, instead of granting him at once the assistance he had come to seek, detained him with great compliments and honours, wasting his time with exaggerated displays of courtesy, and quietly occupying his days in the gradual exhibition of his armouries, his jewels, and the other valuables of his palaces. He made Abdelmelic, meanwhile, the most flattering offers and promises; but it was not until after the lapse of much precious time that he finally wrote to his Alcaides, commanding them to assemble the cavalry of the land, and finally he dismissed the Prince Abdelmelic with a troop of two hundred horse, assuring him that he might confide in his promises, and begging that he would consider himself under the protection of his good faith.

When Abdelmelic arrived in the vicinity of Cordova, he found the city to be closely besieged by the King of Toledo, and saw that it would not be possible to enter without fighting his way through the victorious troops of that sovereign. He thus resolved to pass round by Medina Azahra with his small band of cavaliers, hoping that the succours promised by the King of Seville might yet arrive in time to be useful, although their appearance was delayed much beyond what he would have desired.

In the city, meanwhile, the inhabitants were now be-

ginning to find themselves in the utmost need, having been totally unprepared for the calamities which had so suddenly fallen upon them. The king was very ill, and the cares pressing upon his thoughts increased his malady to such a degree, that the physicians and all the court were thrown into great alarm, and large rewards were offered to any who would venture to be the bearers of letters which the council had determined on sending to Prince Abdelmelic and the King of Seville, that monarch having now become the sole hope of Cordova. Certain messengers were accordingly found, who contrived to cross the enemy's camp, and carried the letters which the king and council had written to the Prince Abdelmelic and Aben Ahed, King of Seville, to whom they made known all their perils, declaring that they had no other chance for safety than that of the succour which he should bring them.

Aben Abed took care to lose no time when so opportune an occasion for the fulfilment of his ambitious purposes was presented to him; he therefore instantly despatched his son Muhamad with his general, Aben Omar, to whom he gave minute instructions as to all that he desired them to do. Everything being perfectly understood, he dismissed them with a powerful host both of horse and foot.

The Sevillian army arrived before the beleaguered city of Cordova accordingly, where they encamped in sight of the besiegers, and while the infantry were preparing to attack the camp of the enemy, the cavalry instantly engaged in skirmishing with the valiant troops of Ismael Ben Dylnoun and his allies. These last, on their part, received the attacking force with so much steadiness, and were encountered by the men of Seville with such determined bravery, that the skirmish was prevented from becoming a general battle only by the intervention of the night, which put an end to the conflict.

But although darkness divided the combatants, it did not bring sleep to the eyes of the Sevillian general, Aben Omar, who passed the whole night in reviewing the various divisions of his army, and in giving the needful directions to the Alcaides and captains. To ensure the success of the coming battle, he took council with the Prince Muhamad Aben Abed, and with other generals, as to the best methods of

attack, and concerting the plan of battle, they took care to provide for all the various incidents that might occur. The moment having arrived when the first light of dawn appeared, Aben Omar put his cavalry in motion, and the same being done by the generals of Ismael Ben Dylnoun, the two hosts went forth to the encounter with indescribable fury, each inspired with equal valour, and both alike confident of victory. The battle then commenced, and was a very sanguinary one, but the force of the Sevillian cavalry, joined to that of Cordova, prevailed against the advanced guard of Valencia, whom they routed and put to flight, when the whole of the besieging army fell into disorder; and although the troops of Ayahila did for some time restrain the impetuosity of the victors and protected the retreat of their allies, yet before the fall of evening the Toledan army was in full flight, being hotly pursued by the flower of Aben Abed's cavalry and that of Cordova, led on by the son of the Sevillian monarch, Prince Muhamad Aben Abed, Infant of Seville, and by Prince Abdelmelic of Cordova. Nor did the brave cavaliers then in Cordova itself remain idle spectators of the battle; large numbers of them having joined the fight, now took part in the victory, and were among the foremost in pursuit.

The crafty general, Aben Omar, then saw that a good part of what his master had committed to him was accomplished, and next considered how he might best ensure the success of what remained to be done. Large numbers of the people of Cordova had come forth from its walls, some to take part in the battle, and others to plunder the camp of the defeated Toledans; they had thus left the city without guards of any kind, as fearing no injury from their allies, whom they beheld so earnest in their defence, and at whose hands they expected nothing worse than benefits. Aben Omar now perceived, therefore, that his opportunity had arrived, and availing himself thereof, without the loss of a moment he entered the capital with the whole force of his infantry, occupying the gates and forts, taking possession of the Alcazar, and placing a guard of such men as were most firmly seated in his confidence over the person of the unhappy king, who lay grievously sick in his bed. He was but too soon made aware of what had happened, and when

he saw that his city and Alcazars were in the hands of the King of Seville, the whole extent of his people's misfortune lay clear before him. Deep affliction then took possession of his heart, and the pain of that grief bore the sufferer to the point of death, by which means he escaped from his misfortunes, and departed for the justice of Allah some few days thereafter.

The son of the betrayed king, even Prince Abdelmelic, returning from the pursuit of the common enemy, also discovered the black treachery of his allies, and filled with a just indignation, he advanced towards the gates of the city, but found that all were closed against him. Whilst still undecided, and knowing not what steps to take in a calamity so little looked for, he found himself surrounded by the cavalry of Seville, whose officer gave the astonished Prince to understand that he had no choice but to surrender himself, while his followers were commanded to leave their horses and lay down their arms.

Revolted by the nameless treachery and baseness of this demand, the unfortunate Abdelmelic placed himself in an attitude of defence, attacking those who surrounded him in desperation, and with no other thought than that of dying with his sword in his hand rather than resign himself to the mercies of so treacherous a foe. More than once did his captors open their ranks in such sort that he might well have passed through them and fled, but he was at length struck from his horse by a troop of lancers, and being previously wounded, was then imprisoned in a strong tower, where he died, rather of the grief he felt than from the hurts he had received, although these last were also many and serious.

The writers of the period relate, that among the last words of Abdelmelic were a lamentation for the treachery of his false friend, and a prayer to the God of vengeance that equal measure might be meted out to the son of him who, under the mask of affection, had concealed the face of so deadly a foe. The death of the hapless Abdelmelic took place on the very day when the traitorous King of Seville made his public entrance into the city of Cordova, and the betrayed friend expired as the voice of acclamation with

which the vile multitude received the tyrant, came pealing to his ears; yet not before he had uttered a malediction on the light-mindedness of that people who could thus give welcome to the enemy by whom the race of their beneficent kings had been so wickedly destroyed.

The favours which the King of Seville now hastened to bestow on the principal inhabitants of Cordova, with the long series of festivals wherewith he entertained the people, brought all to offer him ready allegiance; he gave the populace varied spectacles, consisting in the combats of wild beasts, and, unaccustomed to such diversions, their new master succeeded in making the ungrateful Cordovans forget the excellent Gehwar and the kindly government of that good king his son, who had done all that in him lay for their welfare.

But with Hariz Ben Alhakem, the faithful servant of his departed master, the case was different. On discovering the treachery of the pretended allies, he had retired with such of his cavaliers as he could keep together, to the Alcazar of Medina Azahra: when the death of his king, with the imprisonment of Prince Abdelmelic, reached his ears, he was seized with indignation at the perfidy of Aben Abed no less than with grief for the loss of his master: detesting the atrocious conduct of the Sevillian, therefore, he preferred to confide himself to the generosity of his declared enemies, to the favour and protection eagerly proffered him by that false friend, and took refuge with the King of Toledo. By that sovereign the unfortunate general was received with much kindness; he was indeed greatly honoured by Ismail Ben Dylnoun, who well knew the loyalty, as well as bravery, of Hariz Ben Alhakem, having had frequent experience of both in the long war which that general had maintained against him.

Such was the end of the Gehwars—so did they finish their existence, and with them came the kingdom of Cordova to its close.

CHAP. V.—THE KING OF VALENCIA IS DESPOILED OF HIS STATES BY THE KING OF TOLEDO.—DEATH OF ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE.

Now in the year 452, the King of Valencia, Abdelaziz Almanzor, son of Abderahman and grandson to the renowned Hagib Muhamad Ben Abi Amer, departed to the mercy of Allah, and was succeeded in that kingdom by his son Abdelmelic Ben Abdelaziz, called Almudafar, who was the son-in-law of Almamoun Yahye Ben Ismail Ben Dylnoun, King of Toledo, as hath been more than once remarked.

That powerful monarch being greatly mortified by the repulse his troops had suffered before Cordova, was now disposed to make a new attempt on that city, and the rather, as he was strongly incited to do so by the noble general Hariz Ben Alhakem, who was inflamed by the desire for vengeance on Aben Abed, the destroyer of his master's house. Ismail Ben Dylnoun therefore wrote to all his Alcaides, as well as to his son-in-law, the new King of Valencia, commanding the former to make preparation, and requesting that the latter would come to his aid with his people. Ismail Ben Dylnoun also despatched messengers to the rulers of Murcia and Conca, as well as to other Walies of his dependencies, desiring their assistance for the like purpose.

But Muhamad Ben Meruan, the Vizier of Abdelaziz, King of Valencia, advised his lord to think maturely before he declared himself the enemy of so powerful a sovereign as Aben Abed, King of Seville; one too who was besides in close alliance with the lords of Castillon, Murbiter, Xativa, Almeria, and Denia, his neighbours. This advice Abdelaziz felt disposed to follow; and thus he replied to the request of his father-in-law by the most frivolous excuses.

This proceeding on the part of Abdelaziz enraged the King of Toledo, and without communicating his determination to any one of his court, he departed with the whole force of his cavaliers, nor ceased his march either day or night until he arrived at Valencia, which city he entered when he was least expected. Proceeding to the Alcazar, which was defended by Aben Wahib Ben Leboun, he took the general by surprise, and making himself master in like manner of the

city towers, he deposed his son-in-law, Abdelmelic Almudafar, from the government and sovereignty of Valencia and its dependencies. Yet in consideration of his daughter, the wife of the deposed king, he did not take his life, but banished him to the government of Xelba: this notable event took place on Arafa, the 9th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 457. Almudafar and his family were followed by the Walies of Conca and of Santamaria de Aben Razin, both of whom were his friends.

The King of Toledo then appointed Isa Ben Leboun Ben Abdelaziz Ben Leboun to the government of Valencia in his name,—he was one of the captains of Murbiter, and the most zealous of Ismail Ben Dylnoun's partizans: the city was held by him for that prince, accordingly, but with him was joined Abul Arbaz Ibraim Ben Leboun, a Xeque in whom the King of Toledo placed great confidence. A few days beheld the country tranquillized and brought into good order, which done, Almamun Yahye Ben Ismail Ben Dylhoun returned to Toledo, whither he took the most distinguished nobles of Valencia in his train, proposing to use their services in the war of Andalucia. But the Vizier of Valencia, Abdallah Muhamad Ben Meruan, could not resolve on surviving the misfortunes which he had brought on his lord by his well-intended councils; wherefore, yielding to his despair, he deprived himself of life by piercing his breast with his dagger.

The King of Seville, Almoatadid Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail Aben Abed, was meanwhile enjoying the success of his fortunate undertakings. Lord of Seville, Cordova, and Carmona, he likewise possessed the greater part of Algarve, Sibla, Huebla, Gezira-Saltis, Oksonoba, and Xilbe:* but all this did not satisfy his ambitious heart, and he began to assemble troops for the purpose of attacking the frontiers of the King of Toledo, despatching in the meantime his son Muhamad to the land of Ronda, there to make war

* It would seem that this city of Oksonoba, or Octonoba,—called also by the Arabic writer Sainte Marie d'Octonoba,—was on the western coast of Spain, and near the place where the city of Faro now stands. Yet it was not the city of Faro itself, as some authors suppose, since that city is also mentioned as a separate place by the Arabs themselves. —*De Marlès.*

on the kings of Granada and Malaga, who were allies of El Barzeli, the Lord of Ecija, whose destiny it was, as Aben Abed inferred, to destroy his dynasty, according to what the astronomers had foretold long before.

On the occasion of that campaign the King of Seville conferred the dignity of knighthood on his son, bestowing on him a shield of azure blue, around the edge of which there was a border of golden stars, and in the centre of the field a half-moon, also of gold, in allusion to the changes and vicissitudes ever incident to the fortune of arms. King Aben Abed accompanied his son as far as Ronda, where he hoped to receive intelligence of the first successes obtained by the new knight.

In the year 460, the King of Algarve, Almutafar Almanzor, son of Abdallah Almanzor, departed from life at Badajoz, when he was succeeded in his states by his son Yahye, who called himself Almanzor, as his grandfather had done. His brother Omar Almetuakil, who was then in Jabora, which Comarca he held for his father, caused him some trouble with respect to the division of the territory; and this circumstance left the new King of Algarve but little time for taking part in the wars at that time raging in Andalucia.

At this time there came into Spain great rumours respecting the Almoravides, and wonderful things were related of the stupendous exploits which they had performed, and the conquests which they had made in Africa; all which caused great anxiety to Edris of Malaga and to the Zanhagas of Granada for the safety of those dominions which they possessed in that country. Neither was the King of Seville without some fear, since he was induced to believe that these Almoravides might be the people by whom, according to the horoscope of his son, the fate of that prince was to be clouded. But he did not on that account desist from making war on El Barzeli; nor would he give himself rest until he had despoiled the Lord of Ecija of all his possessions, being constantly impelled to new aggressions by his inordinate ambition, and by the superstitious precautions wherewith he hoped to avert the evils which had been announced to him, according to his astrologers, by the stars: at a word, he was moved by every evil passion that can disquiet and corrupt the human heart.

While the King of Seville was thus extending his own dominions by destroying all the rights of his neighbours, and was eagerly adding the ruin of Malaga and Granada to that of the many other evils he had inflicted on whomsoever he could bring within his reach, he gave no thought to the advancement of our holy religion, nor had any of his expeditions the most remote reference to the propagation of the Law, or the benefit of the Moslemah. But the powerful Arbiter of human fates and empires was meanwhile preparing a glorious day of vengeance for the aggrieved and afflicted children of the Faith: and the manner of its appearance was on this wise.

Unlike the King of Seville, the King of Saragossa, even Ahmed Abu Giaffar Almuctadir Aben Hud, zealously imitating the pious virtues of his forefathers, employed his forces without ceasing in the Sacred war, and in the year 460 he defeated and routed the Christians with horrible slaughter. He recovered from them the city of Bubaster, with several strong fortresses; and for his greater glory, as well as to the general consolation of the Moslemah, he slew King Radmir, leader of of the Infidels, in one of the battles thus happily won.

At this time there broke out new troubles in the kingdom of Malaga, where Edris Ben Yahye, now become old and wanting force of mind, was deposed without difficulty or opposition, while his cousin, Muhamad Ben Alcasim Ben Aly, Governor of Algezira, assumed the throne in his stead. The poor King Edris died some time afterwards in the prison to which he had been consigned, and in his last days there was so little account made of his existence that he was seldom or never mentioned.

The new sovereign of Malaga continued to maintain the war into which his predecessor had been forced by the King of Seville, who was perpetually extending his dominions both in Axarquia and Algarbia.*

About this time, the King of Granada, Habus Ben Maksam of Zanhaga, departed from life, and was succeeded by his son, Badis Ben Habus, a man brave and noble as his father. He too maintained a constant war against the

* Axarquia and Algarbia: the East and West.

aggressions of the Sevillian monarch; and although his resources were heavily taxed by the circumstance of his being frequently called on to repress the rebellious attempts of many rebel Alcaydes in various parts of his dependencies, he yet never lost any part of the dominions he had inherited.

But the state of things here described prevented this prince from employing his arms against the Infidels, seeing that he was ever occupied in defending himself against those ambitious Moslemah, who, disregarding what ought to have been the common cause, concerned themselves only with what they believed to be their own particular interests. King Badis Ben Habus associated in his government, and declared his successor, his nephew, Abdallah Ben Balkin Ben Badis, a youth of admirable qualities, who was the delight of his people as he was the terror of his enemies, although but in the flower of his age.

Now it chanced about this time, that Taira, the daughter of the King of Seville, a princess of unequalled beauty and admirable grace, was seized with an ardent fever while still in the bloom of her spring; and, despite all the efforts of her physicians, she expired in the arms of her father, who doated on her with an inordinate love. The pain and grief which this event caused to Muhamad Ben Muhamad Ben Ismail were so great that he too was attacked by fever and trembling, accompanied by great confusion of the head and perpetual faintings: these were followed by profound stupor and melancholy. The sick man could obtain no sleep, he was at length unable to move his eyes, and thus partially paralysed, he then looked like a mere statue. The physicians feared his death, and applied stimulants, by which the vitality of their patient was to a certain extent restored, when the pains of his condition appeared to be alleviated.

He desired that his daughter should be interred before the entrance of his palace, and would not be dissuaded from beholding the pomp of her burial. The coffin of the princess was borne to her place of rest by the most important of her father's servants; and in despite of all that his physicians could urge to the contrary, Muhamad insisted on being conveyed to a window from which he could see the procession. The funeral ceremonies took place on the evening of a cer-

tain Juma, in the moon of Giumada Primera; and the grief of the king as he saw the child of his love borne to her grave caused all the worst symptoms of his malady to return.

The stupor and melancholy from which he had been in some degree aroused now recurred: inflammation succeeded: the physicians employed all such means as their science suggested; but, although some slight alleviation of suffering was obtained, these remedies did not produce essential improvement. It is true that on the morrow of that unhappy Juma he was a little better, but towards the evening of Saturday, which was the day on which God had decreed that his agonies should find an end, the fever increased: Muhamad lost the power of speech, and at midnight his spirit returned to the mercy of God. At that moment there rose up a dolorous cry in his Alcazar; and through all the city the lamentations of his slaves and household made themselves heard.

The death of Muhamad Aben Abed took place between the Saturday and Sunday, which was the 2nd* day of the moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 461. The mournful event could not be concealed, and on the following day the Xuhudes and ministers of the king's council offered the oath of allegiance to his son, Prince Muha Maun Ben Muhamad Almutamed, who was then twenty-nine years, two months, and some days old. He was proclaimed, and led through the streets of the city on horseback by the principal Xeques and the generals of the army, who called him Adafir Almuyad Billah, with other august titles of good omen.

The new king caused the funeral ceremonies of his father to be performed with great magnificence, and commanded that he should be laid in the tomb of his grandfather, which was beneath the entrance of the Alcazar. The Cadi Muhamad Ben Ismail made the oration for him in the Aljama on that same evening of Sunday, the 3rd day of Giumada Primera, which was the night following that on which Aben Abed had given to God an account of his sins. He was fifty-seven years, three months, and seven days old at the time of his death, having been born on a Tuesday, seven days before the commencement of the moon Safar, in the

* Abu Meruan Ben Hayan says the 6th.—*Condé.*

year 407. His reign had endured twenty-eight years and two days.

This sovereign was the most powerful ruler in all Spain at that time of Alfitna or civil war: he was magnificent in his tastes and habits, but ambitious and voluptuous to an inordinate degree: he was moreover superstitious, timid, and cruel. He had earnestly exhorted his son to be on his guard against the Lamtunies or Almoravides, and recommended him to make himself master of, and carefully preserve, those two keys of Spain, Gebaltaric* and Algezira; but above all to gather into his own hands and unite into one empire, the divided provinces of Spain: all which, as Aben Abed did not scruple to affirm, belonged to him as Lord of Cordova.

CHAP. VI.—War between the kings of Toledo and Seville. Each party calls in the aid of the Christians.

The new king, Muhamad Almoatemed Aben Abed, did not permit the councils of his father to be forgotten: still in the best of his youth, brave as well as prudent, he was not cruel and sanguinary as his father had been, though resembling that sovereign in his magnificence, and in the liberality with which he stimulated the zeal of all whom he took into his service. In the height of prosperity, and when crowned by victory, Almoatemed Aben Abed still displayed a praiseworthy moderation: he restored to their homes all those whom the cruelty of his father had expatriated, and thus gained the hearts of many grateful subjects: the sole reproach uttered against him was that he displayed but little regard for religion. It was also the custom of this monarch to drink wine, which he used most especially in the time of war: and when they were about to enter the battle he permitted the forbidden beverage to all his people. Aben Abed was endowed with an excellent genius for poetry and composing verses, in which he competed with his friend Moez-Daula, King of Almeria: but both those princes were

* Gibraltar.

equally protectors of learning and the patrons of learned men.

At this time there also died the Lord of Azahila, Abu Muhamad Huzeil Aben Racin, known as Aben Aslai. He was succeeded in his states by his brother, Abdelmalec Ben Chalf Abu Meruan, who was careful to continue in alliance with the powerful King of Toledo, Ismail Ben Dylnoun. That prince had no sooner heard of the death of Aben Abed, King of Seville, than he determined to try his fortune against the son of the departed monarch; and, with the troops which he had gathered from Valencia and Santamaria of the East, he made his way into the territories of Murcia and Tadmir, whose Walies, Abu Becar Aben Amer and Ahmed Ben Taher, had entered into an alliance with the King of Seville against Valencia and Toledo. But while he thus fell on the lands of Murcia and Tadmir with a powerful host, Almamun Aben Ismail Ben Dylnoun called for aid from the Christian people of Gallicia and Castille; who came to his assistance accordingly with a carefully selected body of cavalry.

Thus assailed, the Walies, Abu Becar and Aben Taher, wrote to their ally the King of Seville, entreating him to send them succour; seeing that they could not sustain the assault of the Toledan alone, since he was advancing against them with a very powerful host. To these letters the King of Seville, who was then much occupied by his wars with Malaga and Granada, replied by despatching his general and intimate friend, the crafty Aben Omar, of Sombos, with exact instructions as to the line of policy which he was to maintain in the assistance he was about to render, and in the general conduct of the war. Aben Omar thereupon departed from Seville, leading a vast force of cavalry, with two hundred camels, and other beasts of burthen beyond count. He left the city by the gate called Bab Macarena, but remained immediately in front of the same four days before his final departure; after which time he unfurled his banners, sounded his trumpets, and set forth for the land of Tadmir, gathering both troops and provisions along the whole line of his march.

In Murcia, Aben Omar was entertained in the house of Aben Taher, where he received the visits of the principal

inhabitants of the city, to whom he made so many promises and gave so much encouragement, that he left them full of confidence. His abode in Murcia was not extended beyond two days; but before his departure he obtained from Aben Taher ten thousand doubloons of gold, for the purpose of completing negociations with Ben Raymond, Lord of Barcelona, towards which city it was that Aben Omar then took his way.

The Sevillian leader was received with much distinction by Raymond, the Barcelonian, and the convention between them was quickly made. The amount of succour to be furnished by the Lord of Barcelona being determined on the day when the force of Ben Raymond took the field Aben Omar paid him the ten thousand doubloons of gold which he had received from Aben Taher, with a promise of as much more when the Christian host should arrive in Murcia.

It was furthermore decided, for the greater security of both parties, that hostages should be given on either side, when the Lord of Barcelona sent the cousin of his son to accompany the army of Aben Omar, while the last-named general consigned to the hospitality of Ben Raymond a young prince, the son of his master, the King of Seville, who was called Raxid Ben Abed, promising at the same time that a force of Sevillians, equal to the army furnished by Raymond the Barcelonese, should take the field with the troops of that leader.

Aben Omar then wrote letters which he despatched to his lord by the hands of Ben Raymond's cousin, and wherein he requested the King of Seville to send his son and his people as had been agreed; whereupon Raymond commenced his march forthwith, having placed himself at the head of a brilliant body of cavalry, wherewith he set forth towards Murcia.

Arrived in that territory, he was there instantly joined by the forces of the King of Seville, with whom was the son of that monarch, even Raxid Ben Abed, who at once passed over to the Christian camp, where he remained as a hostage with the King Ben Raymond. Aben Omar then took the command of his master's troops, which were not very numerous, but with which he nevertheless proceeded towards Murcia. They found that city surrounded by the forces of

Toledo, commanded by their king Almumun Aben Ismail Ben Dylnoun, who had also the men of Valencia, Denia, and Murbiter forming part of his host, with those assembled by his Alcaydes and the Lords of Conca and Aben Razin, to say nothing of his auxiliaries from Galicia and Castille; he also having called in the Christians to his aid as we have said, when those Infidels occupied themselves gladly in cutting up the cultivated fields, and destroying the pleasant gardens of the Vega.

But now it came to pass, that Ben Raymond of Barcelona, remarking the smallness of the army sent by the King of Seville, and perceiving that he could not count on the aid of a stronger body, complained of Aben Abed, the King, to his general Aben Omar; declaring that unless his Lord came to his succour with more effect, they could not venture to undertake anything against the King of Toledo, who had not only a great advantage as to numbers, but was also in a much better position than themselves, he having already formed a very strong encampment. Nay, the distrust of the Christian arose to such a degree that he suspected a purposed treason on the part of Aben Abed, and began to believe that himself and his people had been lured thither that they might perish by the hands of the Moslemah. To render his army the more secure, therefore, he commanded the Infant Raxid Ben Abed to be placed under a strong guard.

These complaints, and the distrust existing between the leaders, produced a bad effect on the troops, whom they indisposed for action. There were also not wanting spies of the King of Toledo, who made him acquainted with all that was thus passing; while the Christians of Gallicia and Castille were equally well informed, by means of their fugitive brethren who passed over from the camp of the Barcelonese monarch, Ben Raymond.

Perceiving their opponents to be in so ill-prepared a condition, the King of Toledo and his allies gave them no time to recover themselves, but forced them into a battle, which was a very sanguinary one, and resulted in a frightful carnage on both sides. Finally the troops of Seville and Barcelona were compelled to give way, and fled before their conquerors of Toledo, Gallicia, and Castille, leaving the field of battle covered with the corpses of their slain.

Now at the moment when this slaughter was proceeding, the King of Seville, Aben Abed, had arrived in the vicinity of the camps with a carefully chosen body of cavalry, which he had assembled from Jaen and its Comarcas. At the dawn of day he had even approached so near the scene of conflict that his advanced guard had reached the heights above Segura; but on reaching the shores of the Guadimena he found that river so much swollen by floods that his forces could not cross the stream, and they were detained on its banks during the whole day. Aben Abed was at that moment far from suspecting the pressing necessity that existed for his succour; nor was it until he beheld the fugitive remains of his army, with the equally shattered force of his ally, approaching the opposite shore in full flight before their conquerors, that he was made aware of the disasters which had befallen the two leaders, Raymond of Barcelona and Aben Omar.

The first who had the good fortune to cross the river in safety soon made known the unhappy result of the battle; but the panic which had seized the flying troops had now become so violent that numbers of them threw themselves into the stream at places where it was impossible to ford its depths, and these were consequently drowned, their bodies being carried down by the current before the eyes of their companions who watched them from the opposite shore. This infused so much discouragement into the newly arrived troops of the King of Seville that it was not possible to lead them further; they turned their bridles and regained the city of Segura; whence, after the detention of one night only, they retook their way to Jaen, Aben Abed having the cousin of Raymond, Lord of Barcelona, still in his company.

The General Aben Omar, who had escaped from the battle with some few of his followers, now came fast on the steps of his master, whom he overtook, some few days after the grievous defeat he had sustained, at the city of Guada Bullon. Here the general persuaded his lord to fulfil the remainder of the promise which had been made to the Lord of Barcelona, since they could not otherwise effect an exchange of the hostages; and Ben Raymond would in that

case bear off the Infant, even Raxid Aben Aben, as a prisoner, to the land of Barcelona.

The King of Toledo meanwhile, greatly rejoicing in the success which had attended his arms, offered favourable conditions to the people of Murcia, and Aben Taher, accepting these advantages, placed himself and his territory under the shelter and protection of Ismail Ben Dylnoun, to whom he declared himself a faithful vassal; when the principal inhabitants of the city did homage to Aben Ismail in like manner.

Almamdeleoun Ben Ismail Ben Dylhoun likewise obtained possession of the fortresses of Auriola and Mulaque by a peaceable agreement; and leaving these to the care of his Alcaides, he had no sooner placed the land in tranquillity and good order than he returned to his city of Toledo, when he rewarded his generals with a regal magnificence, the Moslemah, together with the Christians of Gallicia and Castille, who had been his auxiliaries on that successful day.

When the General Aben Omar had collected the sum required for his engagements in Barcelona, he set forward to that city, taking with him the cousin of Ben Raymond the king, for whom he was charged with a rich present of thirty thousand doubloons in gold. He then obtained restitution of the Infant, Raxid of Seville, whom he sent to his father, accompanied by Aben Becar of Tadmir, the latter not consenting to separate himself from the fortunes of Aben Abed. Those who saw the meeting of that illustrious king with his son, declare that he wept for joy at the sight of his child.

Aben Omar was meanwhile busying himself with new negociations, into which he at this time entered with Almutemen, son of the King Almoctadir of Saragossa, who was Wali of Lerida, which he held for his father the king above-named. Here Omar incited the nobles to much discord, and eventually caused the persecution, not to say ruin, of several powerful families, compelling them to depart from the territory. These men then took refuge with Abdilbar Ben Mugihaid, Lord of Denia, when Aben Omar persuaded the Prince of Saragossa to make war on Abdilbar

Ben Mugihaid, against whom Omar himself served in person, taking possession of several fortresses in various parts of the district: all these things occurred in the moon Xaban of the year 468.

While Almoctadir, King of Saragossa, pursuing the perfidious counsels of Aben Omar, was thus rewarding the noble and generous hospitality of Abdilbar Ben Mugihaid, Lord of Denia, by defeating him in a sanguinary battle, and was then preparing to enter his city, where it was the purpose of Omar to cause all who had taken refuge therein to suffer a painful death, there came an Alcayde to Almoctadir exhorting him on the part of Moez-Daula, Lord of Almeria, who had married the daughter of Abdilbar, to desist from a war which was causing him so much discredit, and rather to turn his victorious banners against the enemies of Islam, who were even then infesting the frontiers; while he was casting a shade on his hitherto unblemished reputation by the blood he was so unjustly shedding.

These reasonings prevailed with the King of Saragossa, who immediately returned to his own territories, leaving two of his Alcaides, called Ibrahim and Abdelgebir, sons of Sohail of Bardania, to maintain the conquests he had made. But these generals, deceived by a double treason on the part of Aben Omar, were induced some short time afterwards to sell the fortresses in question to the minister of Aben Abed, the treacherous Aben Omar, defeating in that same act the views and intentions of the two Walies, Iza Ben Leboun and his brother Abdallah, both of whom had earnestly desired to obtain those strongholds, which lay conveniently near to their lordships. Thus, then, did Aben Omar serve his lord the King of Seville by means of perpetual deceptions and the craft of intrigue

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CHAP. VII.—THE KING OF TOLEDO TAKES CORDOVA AND SEVILLE—HE DIES IN THE LAST-NAMED CITY AFTER IT HAS BEEN DELIVERED BY ABEN ABED.

Now the King Ismail Almamun Ben Dylnoun of Toledo, perceiving himself to be favoured by fortune, and excited

by his own ambition and desires of vengeance, prepared to lead a powerful host against the territory of Cordova, proposing to take Aben Abed at disadvantage, and without giving him time to recover from the defeat and losses which he had sustained in the Battle of Murcia. He assembled his Alcaides and Xeques accordingly; his ally, the Christian King of Gallicia, also coming to his aid with a select body of horsemen, clothed in mail.

With these forces Ismail Almamun Ben Dylnoun entered the territory of Cordova with so much celerity that he effectually surprised his enemies as he had intended. His host poured over the land as doth a tempest of thunder and lightning, carrying desolation into the hearts of all they met, and sweeping the fruitful fields to destruction in the lapse of but a few hours. At the same time Aben Ismail dispatched his general Amir Ben Leboun to the territory of Jaen, where that leader occupied several cities, and among others that of Ubeda, of which King Ismail Ben Dylnoun made him Wali, as he did of Santaberia on the frontier of Saragossa.

In like manner the General Hariz Ben Alhakem took the city of Cordova, which he entered by surprise, and having done so, he proceeded with another body of cavalry to Medina Azarah, the Alcazars of which he occupied with but slight resistance, seeing that the few soldiers by whom they were guarded were easily overcome. There was nevertheless a most sanguinary conflict maintained within the courts of the royal palace, where the African guard, who defended the same, fought with desperate bravery, making unheard of efforts to save the Infant Serag-Daula, son of Aben Abed, King of Seville, a youth in the first flower of his days, who was then at Medina Azahra. But in the struggle between those who desired to take him prisoner and the guards who laboured to retain him within their ranks, the prince unhappily received a mortal wound, of which he instantly expired. The general Hariz Ben Alhakem then returned to Cordova; but first he caused the head of the slain prince to be cut off, and having placed it on the point of a lance, he commanded his people to bear it through the streets of the city: those thus commissioned being furthermore instructed to cry as they went, "Behold the vengeance of

Allah! A great and fearful Avenger is the Lord our God!" For so did Hariz Ben Alhakem believe himself justified in destroying the descendants of him who had so treacherously brought ruin on the house of his master, the good Muhamad Gehwar; even the sons of Aben Abed, King of Seville.

The great body of the King of Toledo's army had meanwhile not made halt, but had proceeded to Seville itself, which they also took without resistance, because the forces of Aben Abed were distributed through the territories of Jaen, Malaga, and Algezira; seeing that in all those districts he was engaged in warfare either of defence or attack, to the last of which his house had lately proved itself but too well inclined. The sole resistance attempted against the troops of Ismail Ben Dylnoun was in the entrance to the Alcazar of Seville, which was well defended by the royal guards. But all these troops were eventually cut to pieces, when the riches which Aben Abed had amassed in that palace were divided by Almamun Ismael Ben Dylnoun among his troops and allies: even the hareem of the King Aben Abed was not respected.

The General Hariz Ben Alhakem was now appointed Naib, or lieutenant of the King Almamun of Toledo in the city of Cordova, while the king himself remained in Seville, where he abode during the six months next following. At the end of that time, Aben Abed, who had meanwhile assembled his scattered power, came with a great host before the city, having taken a solemn oath to recover the possession thereof or die in the attempt.

While Aben Abed thus held the place besieged, Almamun fell sick, and his malady increased in such sort that he perceived the end of his days and of all his glorious undertakings to be fast approaching. He then declared his son Yahye Alcadir Bila to be his successor; but as that prince was still very young, King Almamun appointed Hariz Ben Alhakem Ben Okeisa, with other Walies in whom he placed confidence, to be the guardians and tutors of the youth. He likewise joined his friend and ally the King of Gallicia in that trust, being well assured of the loyalty and good faith of that monarch, and of the affection which he bore to himself and his house.

These dispositions made, Almamun disposed himself to appear before his Creator; and as the King of Seville, Aben Abed, made his way through the city gates, Ismail Ben Dylnoun of Toledo departed from life,—an event which took place in Dylcada of the year 469.*

Now the Walies and generals of the Toledan king did not make known the death of their lord, but fearing lest their troops might be discouraged by thought of the loss they had sustained, they continued to defend the city in the name of that sovereign with equal bravery and ability; yet they were eventually compelled to yield to the determination and valour of Aben Abed and his forces, who were aided by the inhabitants of Seville, these last labouring for their sovereign in every manner that they could devise. The Toledan generals maintained the most perfect order nevertheless, and leaving the city by two of its gates with their munitions of war, made their way through the camp of Aben Abed, who was meanwhile entering triumphantly into Seville by a different quarter; but he did not remain therein beyond the moment needful for the security of his position, when he left in all haste to pursue the retreating Toledans and their allies.

The general Hariz Ben Alhakem meanwhile did not abandon Cordova, but remained there as Naib of the young King Alcadir Yahye Ben Dylnoun, confiding to a certain extent in his old and friendly relations with the inhabitants, and hoping to preserve the city from the hands of the Sevillians, but being also flattered, as it is said, by some of his partizans, who had inspired him with the hope that he might himself be proclaimed sovereign of that state. If that hope was entertained, it is certain that no long time was suffered to elapse before it was effectually destroyed: Aben Abed surrounded the city with his troops, and gave the general Hariz to know that he would never raise the siege until he had reduced the place to his obedience. Many assaults were given and repulsed, the defenders making frequent sallies on the camp of the besieging troops, in

* Other writers give the previous year as that of this King's death.—*Condé.*

whose ranks they made notable havoc. But Hariz Ben Alhakem soon perceived that he could not confide in the inhabitants of Cordova, as he had hoped, seeing that they were divided into numerous parties; he therefore left the city by one gate as Aben Abed entered it by another. The king in person immediately pursued him on horseback, and as Hariz was not willing to give himself the appearance of flying in disorder, he had not gained a sufficient distance to secure his safety; wherefore he was overtaken by Aben Abed, whose attention was fixed on no other than himself. The King of Seville was nevertheless aware that his horse being wearied could proceed but little further, and fearing lest his enemy should even yet escape him, he threw his lance with a dexterity only equalled by the force of the blow, which pierced the body of Hariz from his back to his breast, when that general fell dead from his horse. The enraged king then commanded his people to affix the dead leader to a stake, on which, for the greater ignominy, he had also caused a dog to be impaled, and that stake he ordered the executioners to plant on the Bridge of Cordova.

Hariz Ben Alhakem left a son called Ahmed, who was highly favoured and held in much honour by the King of Toledo, Alcadir Yahye Ben Dylnoun; that monarch conferred on him the Alcaidia of Calatrava, an office wherein Ahmed Ben Hariz distinguished himself by the most signal services to his master, giving repeated proofs of his fidelity, as we shall hereafter have occasion to observe.

By the intrigues of Aben Omar, the Vizier of Murbiter, Abu Iza Leboun Ben Leboun was induced to leave the service of the youthful King of Toledo, to whose father, Almamun Ben Ismail, he had been a most true and loyal servant. Nay, the wily Omar found means to cause so much enmity between Alcadir Yahye, King of Toledo, and the ancient friend of his father, that the latter abandoned the country, repairing with his two brothers, Abu Muhamad Abdallah and Waheb Ben Leboun Abu Zaji, to Seville, where they were received with much favour by the King Aben Abed, who offered them Cadiazgas or governments in his states in exchange for those they had resigned in the territories of the Toledan Monarch. This was in the year 469, and in the same year Abu Iza Ben Leboun died at Seville. His

younger brother, Waheb Ben Leboun, remained in the service of the Sevillian King.

Aben Omar also incited the Wali of Xelba, Abdelmelic Almudafar, son of Abdelaziz, to attempt the recovery of his state of Valencia, from which he had been deposed by Ismail Almamun Ben Dylhoun, in the year 436, as we have related in its place. And in that attempt Abdelmelic succeeded, but did not long survive his restoration to the throne. He confirmed the Walies who had been of his party in their tenancies, gave Conca to Said Ben Alferag, placed Walies who enjoyed his confidence in Liria, Xelba, and Gandia, and declared his son, Abu Becar, his successor. All this took place in the year 470.

When Aben Abed, King of Seville, had recovered his Andalusian states, which he had been enabled to do principally because his general, Aben Omar, had found means to keep the southern part of Spain involved in perpetual discords, excited by his treacherous arts, the restored sovereign summoned his zealous servant to the capital, when he made him his Vizier, entrusting him some time afterwards with the conquest of Murcia, which territory Aben Abed had long desired to subjugate.

Aben Omar thereupon assembled a carefully chosen body of troops, with which he successively occupied the cities of Alicant and Carthagena, Lorca, and Auriola. He was ably assisted throughout the campaign by Abdallah Ben Raxic, Alcayde of the fortress of Balag, who, when he heard that Aben Omar was about to pass by his castle, went forth to the distance of two miles to offer him his dwelling, and such slight convenience as he could therein enjoy. Aben Omar accepted the offers of Abdallah, and passed a night with him, when he held much discourse with that brave and experienced general in relation to the best means for compelling the city of Murcia to surrender, and for securing the conquest of the country. They furthermore considered the most effectual methods for obtaining possession of certain fortresses and towns by which the capital was either defended or furnished with supplies, and in the discussion of all these subjects the prudence and valour of Abdallah Ben Raxic were alike rendered manifest to Aben Omar, who made him so many great offers and flattering promises on

the part of his lord, Aben Abed, King of Seville, that Abdallah could not refuse to accompany the host of Omar, who affected a determination to do nothing without having first ascertained his opinion. They thus proceeded in company to Murcia, of which they cut up the Comarcas, and the city itself they closely besieged.

Now Murcia was well defended by Abderahman Ben Taher, the son of that illustrious Wali, Abu Becar Muhumad Ben Taher, Governor of the land of Tadmir, which he had maintained in justice, peace, and tranquillity through all the troubles of the Civil War, remaining contentedly under the shelter and protection of Zohair the Selavonian, and never aspiring to the sovereignty, or desiring any other title than that of Muthalim, or the Reconciler of Differences,* although his great riches and numerous partizans might have supplied him with abundantly sufficient means and opportunities for exalting himself to independent empire, had he been disposed to make the attempt. This excellent ruler had lived to the age of ninety, and after his death, which took place in the year 457, his son Abderahman continued to govern the country with a moderation in all respects equal to that exhibited by his father.

The siege being unusually prolonged, Aben Omar was compelled to depart for Seville, when he confided the command of his troops to the General Abdallah Ben Raxic, who succeeded, after many assaults and much hard fighting, in obtaining possession of the fortress of Mula, by the occupation of which he was enabled to cut off the supply of provisions which had previously been brought into the city freely, under cover of those defences.

The privations which then ensued soon caused the inhabitants to murmur, and they compelled Abderahman to turn his thoughts towards the best conditions he could obtain for the surrender of the town. The Wali thereupon gave the citizens a promise to the effect that if within twenty days he did not receive succour from Toledo, as he hoped to do, he would then resign the city on such conditions as he should be able to procure.

* Muthalim were perhaps more effectually rendere.. by the word "Redeemer," but we do not use the latter in this place, for obvious reasons.—*Tr.*

The General Abdallah Ben Raxic having sent an account of the progress of the siege of Seville, Aben Omar returned with new troops. When he arrived within sight of the city, the inhabitants of Murcia, who recognized the cavalry of Cordova and Seville, departed from their obedience to Abderahman, and unmindful of the compact they had made to await the lapse of the days agreed on, they threw open the gates and poured forth from the same, proclaiming Aben Abed, King of Seville, to be their lord and ruler.

The Alcaide Aben Taher, hearing the popular commotion, sought refuge in the mosque, when he was taken to the fort of Montacute, where he remained imprisoned until released by the intervention of Abu Becar, son of Abdelmalec Ben Abdelaziz, Lord of Valencia.

Aben Raxic lost no time meanwhile in occupying the gates of the city, and taking the inconstant populace at their word. Aben Omar also entered Murcia without delay, and the city having sworn allegiance to Aben Abed, the Chotba was made for him that same day in the great mosque. This conquest of Murcia by Aben Omar took place in the year 471.

In that same year Aben Abed, King of Seville, gave the government of Lorca to Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Leboun, who was subsequently seized with the vain desire of calling himself king. He then appointed his kinsman, Abul Hassan Ben Elija, to be his vizier; and this Abul Hassan, who was accounted among the best generals of his time, eventually became the successor of Abdallah Ben Leboun in the government of Lorca.

Now the King Aben Abed, fearing lest the Toledans should make an attack, on the territory of Murcia gave the government of that city to his Vizier Aben Omar, whom he furthermore entrusted with an embassy to the King of Gallicia, the object of which was to detach that sovereign from his friendship with the King of Toledo. He furthermore gave Aben Omar a similar mission to his former ally the Lord of Barcelona, requesting that he also would hold himself ready to come to his aid in the event of that which he feared occurring.

On the journey which he undertook by virtue of these commands, Aben Omar visited his old friend Almutemem

Ben Hud, son of Almuctadir, King of Saragossa: of all these missions he acquitted himself exceedingly well, Aben Omar knowing perfectly how to adapt himself to the tastes of the various princes with whom he had to treat of politics, and finding means to insinuate himself into the favour of all, by his craft, by the specious eloquence of his persuasions, and by the elegance of the poetical effusions, wherewith he delighted such of those rulers as he perceived to have sufficient cultivation of taste to appreciate their beauties. The Walies and principal Alcaydes of the kingdom were nevertheless often heard to murmur at the greatness of Omar, and to censure the unbounded confidence which the king reposed in this man, who was declared to obtain immense advantages for himself from every mission with which he was entrusted, and whom they furthermore accused of regarding nothing but his own personal interest, in whatever matter he treated.

At this time King Aben Abed, the Sevillian, was making cruel war on Muhamad, King of Malaga, whose cities he occupied, and whom he defeated with great loss before Baza, a city belonging to the King of Granada, which Aben Abed also took. King Muhamad was on the point of passing over into Africa for the purpose of there assembling a strong body of troops, when he was seized with fever, as some relate, and died from the violence of that malady; but others affirm that he expired suddenly when about to come forth from his bath.

Muhamad, King of Malaga, left eight sons, the eldest of whom, Alsim Almustali, was Governor of Algeria, and succeeded his father in the kingdom; but he lost the sovereignty some few years after, seeing that Aben Abed, King of Seville, did not give him one instant of repose until he had forced from his hands the cities of Malaga and Algezira, compelling Alsim Ben Muhamad to pass over into Africa with all his family.

These conquests were made by Aben Abed in the year of the Hegira 472; in that same year there was a great trembling of the earth, which was such that the sons of men had seen nothing that could justly be compared with it. This earthquake destroyed many buildings, and a very large number of persons perished beneath the ruins of the same.

Mosques, Domes, and Alminbares, were cast to the ground; and these fearful convulsions did not cease to afflict the world, day and night, from the first day of Rebie Primera to the last of Giumada Segunda in the above-named year.

In the Moon of Dylcada of that same year the people of Toledo broke forth in rebellion against their King, Alcadir Ben Dylnoun. They put many of his Viziers to death, and slew the greater part of his guard: whereupon Alcadir left the city with his family, and fled to the Fortress of Cuneca on the borders of Valencia, the wildest and most inaccessible portion of his states.

CHAP. VIII.—TREATY BETWEEN ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE, AND ALFONSO, KING OF GALLICIA. ALFONSO ENTERS THE KINGDOM OF TOLEDO, BUT RETIRES BEFORE THE KING OF BADAJOZ, WHO DIES IMMEDIATELY AFTER. TOLEDO IS TAKEN. DEATH OF OMAR.

THE insatiable ambition of Aben Abed could now find no repose but in the undertaking of new conquests, and the obtaining of yet more exalted triumphs. He sent his Vizier Aben Omar a second time with an embassy to Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of Gallicia, inciting that Infidel to fall on the territories of Moslemah rulers.

Abu Becar, Lord of Valencia, and the General Aben Raxic, murmured greatly at these negociations with the Christian king, which they declared to be undertaken without regard to the laws of God or the dictates of conscience; and they added that the King of Seville would end by sacrificing to his ambition not only the towns and people of Islam, but his own family; also the treacherous Aben Omar was entrusted with unlimited powers to contract that shameful alliance with Alfonso, to say nothing of the vast sums of money which that embassy could not fail to cost. But in the eyes of God all the riches of the world have no more value than the wing of a fly.

On that occasion Aben Omar received, as a present from the Gallician King Alfonso, two precious rings formed of emeralds, the value whereof was as that of cities and castles.

Nay, the workmanship of which, to say nothing of the gold, was thought a full equivalent for the cities, the tears, and the blood: Allah alone can appreciate these things. At a word, Alfonso Ben Ferdeland was induced by Aben Omar to enter into a secret treaty with Aben Abed, King of Seville, and forgetting the generous hospitality which he had received in Toledo from its king, Almamun, father of Alcadir Yahye, he declared himself the enemy of the latter: perfidiously disregarding the alliance he had sworn to maintain with Alcadir Ben Dylnoun and his house, he now fell on the frontiers of the kingdom, cutting up the cultivated fields, laying waste the towns, driving off the flocks, and carrying the unhappy inhabitants into captivity. All this was done to promote the evil intentions of Aben Abed, King of Seville, who was thus enabled to desolate Andalusia with a cruel warfare at his leisure, which he did with free and unembarrassed hands, while his Christian ally was ravaging the homes of the Moslemah as hath been said. Thus did Aben Abed persist in extending his states and raising the lofty towers of his ambition upon the ruins of all other Moslemah princes.

The King of Saragossa, even Abed Abu Giafar Almanzor Almuctadir Billah, was meanwhile preparing diligently to march in aid of Alcadir Yahye; but the inimical Fates cut short his glorious steps, and he died before he could accomplish that laudable purpose. The decease of Ahmed Abu Giafar Almanzor took place in the year 474, when he departed to receive that eternal rest which was the due reward of his labours in this world. His son, Jusuf Abu Amer Almutamen, was proclaimed in his place, and the people of Saragossa swore obedience to his will in the moon of Giumada Primera of that year.

This prince found himself involved in perpetual wars on his frontiers. He proved his valour and the ardour of his zeal for Islam in the terrible battles of Lerida and Huesca, where, with forty thousand men, he gave to the sight of the sun the most horrible spectacle that can be presented by the fierce children of war, seeing that in a few short hours he caused the streams of the Hersera and the Zinga to overflow with the blood of the slain.

The oppressed King, Yahye of Toledo, now sent his

messengers to the King of Badajoz, even Yahye Ben Alaftas, called Almanzor, entreating him to come to his aid and be his protector, when that noble sovereign congregated his Alcaides without delay, and, accompanied by a select body of cavalry, crossed with hasty marches the plains that are watered by the Guadiana and the Tagus. The fame of his arrival alone sufficed to compel Alfonso Ben Ferdeland of Gallicia to break up his camp and return to his home; but he laid waste and destroyed the whole land as he passed, carrying off the unfortunate dwellers in the same, with their flocks and other possessions. By the opportune aid thus afforded to the King of Toledo, and the glorious victory obtained by the mere sound of his approach, the King Alaftas fully proved himself to merit the august title, Almanzor, with which his people had endowed him, and, well content with the result, he returned to his own frontiers.

The King Yahye Alaftas then entered Merida with his forces, and was there reposing from the fatigues of the march, when Death, who so ruthlessly cuts short all the delights of this world, disappointing and rendering nugatory the very fairest hopes, fell upon him with unexpected haste, and translated him thence to the Alcazars and eternal dwellings of the after-life.

The people of Ben Alaftas mourned his loss, because he was a good king, and all the more did they lament him since he had not left them the consolation of a successor chosen by his voice. Under these circumstances, therefore, the younger brother of Almanzor, Muhamad Omar Almetuakil,* was placed on the throne. He was then in Zabore, which was his appanage, but finding that the sovereignty of the whole Algarve was now united in his person, Muhamad Omar instantly repaired to Badajoz, leaving Zabora and its Comarcas to the government of his son Alabas Aben Omar. King Omar Almetuakil was a judicious and very learned man; in his youth he had distinguished himself by the most brilliant valour in war, and was no less remarkable for the humanity and justice with which he had governed those committed to his care in time of peace. And as he had given his Waliate of Zabora to his elder son, Alabas Aben

* Fortunate conqueror and protector.

Omar, so did he now confer that of Merida on his younger son, Alfadal Aben Omar. This prince, who was a just and moderate ruler, carefully imitated the virtues of his father, Muhamad Omar, and his brother Alabas,—all three being noble sovereigns, and worthy of a better fate than that which had been inscribed for them on the indelible tablets of destiny.

While Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of the Christians, had thus been making a devastating war against Toledo and its king, Alcadir Yahye, the King of Seville, even Muhamad Ben Muhamad Aben Ismail Aben Abed, had by that means found leisure to extend his dominions widely in the direction of Jaen, and among other places had obtained possession of Ubeda, Baeza and Martos. He now, therefore, conferred the government of Seville on his eldest son, Obeidallah Araxid, called the Cadi, because he held the charge of Cadilcoda in the Mexuar or council of that city. Obeidallah Araxid was a singularly erudite prince, and a great poet as well as accomplished musician: he sounded the lute and other instruments to admiration, and sang his own compositions with a voice of wonderful beauty. On each Thursday of the year he invited the Alfakis and learned men, with all of distinguished genius, to his house, where he entertained them splendidly. To his father, Aben Abed, he gave no less than forty-seven grandsons, the children of his various wives. His Prefect of Justice, or Cadilcoda, was the Faki of the Mexuar, Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Gebir Lahmi, and when that wise man departed this life, Obeidallah Arraxid gave the prefecture to Abul Casim Ahmed Ben Mantur Alkisi. He likewise conferred the government of Algezira Alhadra on his son Yezid Ben Muhamad Arradi, who was called Abu Chalid. This Prince Yezid was the twin-brother* of Abed Alfetah and Obeidallah Almoated, or rather, he was one of three, for the consort of Obeidallah Arraxid, who was called Otamida, had presented him with all those three sons at one birth. He had, indeed, also had another son, who was the child of the same mother, and eldest of all his children; he was called Abed Serag Dola,

* The original is here, *Mellizo*, one of three, and not *Gemelo*, twin; but as we have no exact equivalent for Mellizo, the passage has been rendered by a slight paraphrase, as above.—Tr.

but that youth had died fighting at Medina Azahra, in the year 469.

From consideration for the mother of these princes, Obeidallah Arraxid had bestowed immense revenues on his son Yezid Ben Muhamad Arradi, whom he also made his Rewi, or private secretary, Arradi being very learned and a profound astrologer, having studied the works of the wise Cadi, Abi Becar Ben Altaib, with great care, together with all the chief writers of the school of Abi Ben Hazin Taheri. Prince Yezid was, moreover, the best poet of all the Abedes, his father, Obeidallah Arraxid, alone excepted, to whom he gave seven grandsons, notwithstanding this his great devotion to the sciences. As the instructors of these children, the Prince Yezid Arradi established in Seville the accomplished Abu Abdallah Malc Ben Waheb and Abed Hassen Ben Alhadsir, who was a man of no less distinction.

About this time the government of Malaga was conferred on the brave General Zagut, and that of Ubeda on Zagi Ben Leboun of Murbiter. The Princes Almamun Abed Naser Alfelah and Alhakem Mugehed, called Dothir-Dola Abul Makerim, were placed over Cordova; but the latter constantly made his abode at Medina Azahra.

Now the persistence with which Alfonso Ben Ferdeland came twice in every year to make incursions on the territory of Toledo, had completely devastated the towns and laid waste the fields of that district, insomuch that in the third year the land was found to be totally impoverished and its inhabitants ruined. After these years of perpetual desolation Alfonso completed the mission which the King of Seville and his minister, the wicked Aben Omar, had confided to him, by laying siege to the capital, even Toledo itself. The King, Yahye Ben Almamun, who was better versed in the sportive weapons and pleasures of peace than the rugged arms and stratagems of war, neither could nor would defend himself, nor did he once dare to sally forth against his enemies or meet them in the open field. He wrote, on the other hand, very pressing letters to the King of Badajoz, with repeated and most earnest prayers for aid; whereupon that monarch sent him his son, the Prince Alfadal, Wali of Merida, but the assistance he brought proved of no avail, because the tyrant Alfonso had so completely destroyed the

towns, which he had for the most part laid in ashes, and so thoroughly devastated the fields, from which he had cut the growing crops, that the capital could no longer obtain supplies: such of its inhabitants as remained in life had been compelled to desist from the attempt to defend themselves, unable to endure the privations under which they had long been suffering from these grievous circumstances, while the forces brought by their ally could not prevail to release them from the powerful enemy by whose troops they were constantly surrounded. Thus, after many hardly-fought battles, in which Alfadal saw the flower of his cavalry perish, that prince returned to Merida.

When the hope they had trusted in was thus proved vain, the Cadi Abu Walid of Beja declared to the inhabitants of Toledo that the ruin of the state was irremediable. "The kingdom in whose Chiefs there is not the principle of unity, and whose Captains are of opposite minds," said Abu Walid to the citizens, "however powerful it may be in fact, must perish as doth the wicked, and shall soon find its end; tremble, therefore, lest this King Alfonso should cause you to perish miserably, even to the last man.

Then the people of Toledo, clearly perceiving that no redemption was coming to them from any quarter, while they were dying of hunger, advised their king, Yahye Ben Almamun, to negociate conditions of peace with Alfonso, and even to offer himself as that monarch's tributary. But the tyrant Infidel would grant no conditions, and demanded the immediate surrender of the city. Very deep and heavy was then the grief of the noble Moslemah. They determined to die in the defence of their liberty and the walls of their home: but the people rose in rebellion when this resolve was made known; unable to endure their sufferings, the multitude insisted on the surrender of the place and resigned themselves to their inevitable fate. The more noble of the citizens found means to obtain at length such conditions as they had ceased to hope for; when the mighty and ancient city of Toledo was resigned to its foes.

The conqueror had solemnly promised that "the lives of the inhabitants should be respected, and their possessions secured to them in peaceful and quiet enjoyment; that no mosque should be profaned, nor should the people be

disturbed in the public exercises of their religion. The Mosleman Cadies were to be retained in their offices, and all affairs were to be judged and regulated as they had heretofore been; decided, that is to say, according to the Moslemah laws. Every man was, furthermore, to remain freely in Toledo, or be at liberty to depart and fix his abode elsewhere at his pleasure."

All these conditions were signed by Alfonso Ben Ferdeland and his principal generals, when the Christian king made his entry into the city of Toledo,—an event which took place in the moon of Muharram, in the year 478. King Yahye, with his principal cavaliers, then went forth from the gates and proceeded to Valencia, taking with him the most precious of his treasures. And so was lost that illustrious city, and thus ended the kingdom of Toledo, to the great sorrow of all who remained faithful to Islam.

It was also in that unhappy year of 478 that the illustrious King of Saragossa, Jusuf Almutamen, a truly noble defender of the faith, departed to the mercy of Allah. He died at Saragossa, and was succeeded by his son, Ahmed Abu Giafar Ben Hud, who was called Almustain Billah,—a man of singular virtues, as well as more than common ability.

Now it was not possible that the author of all these unfortunate events, Aben Omar, should be suffered peaceably to enjoy the fruit of his perfidious negociations with the enemies of the faith; all the Alcaides of Spain abhorred him, and many were labouring to secure his downfall.

The General Abdallah Raxid accused him of holding all the castles and strongholds of the frontiers at his command, by means of Alcaides who were either of his family or sold to his interest; and as this charge was perfectly well founded, the conduct of Aben Omar began to awaken suspicion in the mind of his lord, the King Aben Abed, and the latter sent orders to the effect that his hitherto trusted confidant should be taken prisoner. But Aben Omar received timely intimation of this resolve, from his partizans, and fled, first to Murcia, whence he passed into Valencia. Yet, becoming suspicious of the rulers of both cities, who had little reason to be satisfied with his proceedings, he departed from the latter city also, repairing finally to the court of Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of Gallicia, who was then at Toledo.

The traitor was in the first instance well received by King Alfonso, who hoped to make further use of his services in the conquests which he was meditating; but Abdallah Aben Raxic, and other Alcaides of the fallen favourite's enemies, found means to inspire the Christian sovereign with so much distrust of the crafty Omar, that he one day said to him in his own language:—"Thou, oh Aben Omar, thou remindest me of a thief, who, having stolen the fruits of his own dishonesty, can but keep those treasures until others come in their turn to steal them from him."

These words filled the treacherous fugitive with fear and suspicions; he once more took flight, and now sought refuge in Saragossa. There he entered the service of Abu Amer Jusuf Almutamen, who treated him with much distinction, and confided to his care certain matters of intrigue relating to the acquisition of fortresses on the frontiers of Valencia and Murcia. In these negociations, therefore, Aben Omar was furnished with a congenial occupation, deceiving with his perfidious treacheries the incautious men who trusted him, and misleading whomever he could persuade to lend him ear.

The King of Seville, Aben Abed, was meanwhile apprehensive lest the secrets of his various intrigues, and the negociations into which he had so frequently entered with the foes of Islam, should be made known to his enemies by Aben Omar: he therefore charged his grandson, the Prince Yezid Arradi, to take such measures as should secure his capture. And this was at length accomplished by the cares of Abu Becar Ben Abdelaziz of Valencia, whom Aben Omar had deceived with respect to the castle of Jumilla, which is now in the government of Murcia, but was previously in that of Valencia, where the traitorous Omar was held in abhorrence by great and small. Abu Becar therefore hired numerous spies, who kept him minutely informed of every step taken by Omar, making known to their employer the places appointed for his sleeping, as well as those of his mid-day rest, whenever he made the slightest movement. Having thus ascertained that on a certain night the common betrayer was to pass the hours of sleep at Xecura, that place was beset by those who were in the confidence of Omar's enemies, by whom the latter was made

prisoner; an event which took place six days before the close of the moon of Rabie Primera. The infant Prince Yezid was then informed of his capture, and repaired to Xecura accordingly, where he made the necessary dispositions for his safe removal; thus, being first loaded with chains, Aben Omar was carried, under a strong guard, to Cordova.

Through whatever place the captive passed he was assailed with insults by the populace, and even Abu Becar Ben Abdelaziz condescended so far as to despatch a certain Jew, renowned for the swiftness of his course, after the prisoner, with a copy of verses which he had made against him. These, then, the Jew delivered to the unhappy Aben Omar at Caria Jumin, where it was that he overtook the cavalcade, in the midst of which the late powerful minister was led bound.

And now, as the ruined man proceeded on his way, he wrote the most submissive petitions to the King Aben Abed, sending others to the Infant Obeidallah Arraxid also, and entreating that prince to intercede for him with his father, who, as he greatly feared, would no sooner hear of his arrival than he would command him to be put to death. In these last-mentioned letters Aben Omar said:—

"I know the right which Aben Abed has to my blood, and this gives me fear; but I also believe that he cannot have forgotten my services, nor torn from his heart the affection and confidence which I certainly have deserved at his hands. On these, then, do I found my hopes."*

The prisoner arrived in Cordova on a Juma which was the sixth day of the moon Regeb, where he was permitted to remain for repose but one night, and was even then still kept loaded with his chains. On the following day he was taken forth and conveyed to Seville, seated on an ass, and surrounded by a huge number of guards on foot and horseback. The cavaliers who commanded the escort are said by some writers to have worn black armour and clothing; they are furthermore reported to have awaited the arrival of night before entering Seville; but others inform us that

* This passage is in the Arabic at once so elegant and so concise, that I have not been able to render it in a manner which does justice to the original.—*Condé.*

they made their entry with their prisoner some short time after mid-day; and these add, that a vast body of people came forth to gaze on the once great man in his distress, when the populace met him with insults, and rejoiced aloud in his downfall. He was finally taken to the royal palace and confined in a dark retired apartment, of which Aben Abed himself retained the keys. "The guard who had brought him to the city," according to certain of the ancient authorities, "had no sooner resigned their charge into the hands of those belonging to the palace than they retired to make the prayer of Alazar,* and offered their thanksgiving in the mosque while still in their black armour and clothing."

During the course of that same night, Aben Omar requested that a light, with paper and ink, might be brought to him, when he was furnished with the means of writing, and, in effect, he wrote some well-expressed and elegant verses to the king, which he sent by means of the Infant Arraxid, and wherein he said: "I know, my Lord, the right which thou dost hold to my life, but I confide in the love which must still remain for me in thy heart, since none can know the loyalty of my service to thee as thou dost know it, nor can any other man divine the zeal with which I have laboured in thy behalf." To these lines King Aben Abed replied in verses of the same measure, which he wrote on the reverse of the paper sent him by Aben Omar, and wherein he said: "Evil are the times which the Fates are announcing to Oksonoba and to Xelbe; deep also is the wail, and bitter are the tears that shall pour from the eyes and heart of thy hapless mother, even Semsa; profound shall be the sorrows of her inheritance and lasting the grief of her age."

Aben Omar was visited in his prison by the Infant Obeidallah Arraxid, who admired him for the brilliancy of his genius. He likewise received the visits of the Alimes, Iza Alestad Abul Hegiag and Muhamad Aben Ahmed, with those of Abu Becar Ben Zeidun, and other men of distinction, who were yet by no means well affected towards his interests. Aben Omar had at first believed that the king was somewhat moved by his supplications, and had even received intimation to the effect that his life was not to be taken;

* Alazar: afternoon.

but those visitors, who were his enemies, now gave him to understand that Aben Abed had determined on his death; wherefore the prisoner uttered very bitter complaints to the Infant Obeidallah, and said to him: "My Lord, I now perceive that my fate is determined, and the close of my destiny has become clearly manifest to me. The malignant winds of envy and hatred have carried down the light airs of life and joy which Muleyna* was breathing. Yesterday my sovereign did not propose to deprive me of life, but to-day he does but extend my hours that he may the better decide by what mode of torment be can put an end to them in the manner most pleasing to my enemies."

And in effect, after this visit of the Alimes, those men found means to excite the anger of Aben Abed so violently against his captive, that he burst into the apartment where he was confined in a fit of rage, and struck off the head of Aben Omar with his own scimitar. Speaking of this matter, Abdel Gelil Ben Wahbon affirms that there was no man whose eyes were seen to shed a tear for the departed statesman, nor was there a voice upraised to say, "Let there come a withering to the hand of the slayer!" Such, then, was the reward of the artifices and crooked policy to which Aben Omar had devoted those abilities wherewith it had pleased Allah to endow him. His death took place at the commencement of the year 479.

And now, as Aben Abed, King of Seville, perceived that Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, not content with having obtained possession of Medina and Toledo, was pouring his victorious troops over the land, impetuous as winter floods that descend from the mountains, and as he found, moreover, that the King of Gallicia was occupying all the plains which are watered by the Tagus, he thought it now time to put an end to those aggressions, since he greatly dreaded the aggrandizement of the Christian king, who had already made himself master of many towns and fortresses, such as Maglit,† Maquida and Guadilhijara, which he had seized

* Muleyna: Hope.—Tr.

† Maglit. This is considered by some of the authorities to be Madrid; and the mention here made of that city is believed to be the first occurring in history.—Tr.

without finding any force to resist him. He therefore wrote to Alfonso, requiring that he should desist from his attacks on the remaining territory of Toledo, and should content himself with that city; thus fulfilling the promises which he (Alfonso) had made to the King of Seville when they had formed their treaty of alliance.

To this the King of Gallicia replied that he was still ready to perform all that he had promised, and in proof of this declaration he sent Aben Abed five hundred cavaliers to assist him in his attempts on Granada. He furthermore assured his ally that he had forgotten no part of his compact, but was prepared to march a select body of cavaliers, for the service of the King of Seville, into Andalusia; but he added that the towns he had taken were his own and those of the King of Valencia, who was also his friend and ally. For so did Alfonso now call Yahye Ben Almamun, although the latter was in fact the compelled tributary and vassal of the Christian king.

The body of cavalry thus announced did, in fact, enter Andalusia, all clothed in their armour of iron; and being considered the auxiliaries of Aben Abed, they met no resistance, but remained during three days before the gates of Seville, after which they returned to Xiduna, where the king then was.

Much amazed at the sight of this force, Aben Abed then spoke with the Christian commanders, whom he ordered to return to their master, declaring that he was about to make peace with the King of Granada, and required no further succours against him. But in his secret mind Aben Abed had already begun to meditate the ruin of Alfonso Ben Ferdeland. The Christians therefore returned within their borders, but they devastated the lands of Toledo on their line of march, made prey of all the flocks they could find, and led captive such women and children as they could get into their hands.

Aben Abed then wrote to the Kings of Granada, Almeria, and Algarve, proposing to them that an assembly should be held for the discussion of such matters as concerned the defence of the state and the common weal of all the Moslemah of Spain; whereupon it was agreed that a congress or junta of Cadies should be assembled at Seville; the King of

Granada sending his Cadilcoda, and the sovereign of Badajoz his Cadi, Abu Ishac Ben Mokina. Abu Giaffar of Alcolia was the ambassador of Granada. The Vizier Abu Becar Mohamed arrived from Cordova with Abdallah Ben Zeidun; Abul Walid of Beja likewise appeared. All these Cadies assembled in the Aljama of Seville, where they were joined by the Cadi of that city.

Now the opinion of Abu Becar Ben Adahim was expressed to the effect that they should write to Jusef Ben Taxfin, Prince of the Almoravides, whose name, and his conquests in Africa, had become highly celebrated in Spain, nor was there any one of the assembly who opposed himself to this opinion, with the sole exception of Zagût, the Wali of Malaga, who declared that to invite the conqueror of Mauritania into Spain was not advisable. He added that Jusef Ben Taxifin might very probably destroy the power of Alfonso, but that he would then almost certainly place chains on themselves which they might afterwards find it difficult to break. He declared that if they were all of good faith and would cordially unite, with no other object than the true interest of religion, they would without doubt obtain the blessing of God, by whom they would be aided in the conquest of their common enemy, the Christian King of Gallicia, who had owed his aggrandisement solely to their own discord and divisions. The Cadi concluded by saying: "Be united, and you cannot fail to be conquerors; but do not suffer the ancient dwellers on the sandy deserts of Africa to plant their feet on the pleasant fields of Andalusia and Valencia." But this advice was not followed; on the contrary, Zagut was treated as a bad Mosleman, and as one not in communion with those of the Faith.

The King of Seville, Aben Abed, now desiring to gain the good-will of the King of Algarve, demanded the hand of a beautiful daughter of that sovereign in marriage, and a treaty of peace was formed between those monarchs; while Omar Ben Alaftas, King of Badajoz, was charged to write letters, in the name of all the Ameers of Spain represented in that assembly, requesting the Prince of the Almoravides to pass into Spain for the purpose of restraining the pride of King Alfonso, who was casting thunders and lightnings around him, which were threatening the total ruin of Islam.

Ambassadors were then appointed, who were to be the bearers of these missives into the land of Mauritania.

CHAP. IX.—Of the Almoravides, and their wars in Africa.

And now, since the Almoravides and their princes became masters of Spain, it will not be inopportune here to give a short notice of that Moorish people, with a sketch of the origin of their most famous conquests; which were, in fact, the cause of their admission into Andalusia. We will first describe the origin of the Multimines, or Almoravides of the tribe of Lamta, who came from the Desert which extends along the east of Africa, with their General, Abu Bekir; whose origin we will also declare in this place, together with the causes which moved him to leave the Desert, and the manner in which he rose to the government of the tribes, thus giving rise to a new and powerful empire on the coasts of Africa; those lands, namely, which lie on the hither side of the Mountains of Daren, and which the ancients called Mauritania.

The Cabila, or Family of the Multimines, derived its origin from a tribe of still higher antiquity, called the Lamtuna, from the name of their first known ancestor, who was called Lamtu. He was the kinsman of Gudala and Mustafa, who were both chiefs and progenitors of the tribes that bore those names. These men made boast of their descent from another yet more ancient and noble tribe, called that of Sanhaga, of the old blood of Humair, which was that of the first kings of Yemen, or Arabia Felix, where their ancestors dwelt, without deigning to mingle their race with that of the men of Barbary, nor ever permitting their daughters to enter the families of the latter, by marriage with their sons.

The tribe of Sanhaga departed for Yemen and retired into the Desert, in consequence of certain wars, the result of which must otherwise have been to compel them to that mingling of races, and communion with the men of Barbary, to which they were not content to submit. Being poor, they used but one piece of clothing, yet this sufficed to wrap the whole person; and other writers than those we have

hitherto followed have even declared that from this vestment, which was Called Lamt, was derived the Cabila denomination of the Multimines, and not from that of their forefather Lamtu or Lamta, as the authors first consulted affirm. Yet the assertion that they drew their appellation from the name of their progenitor of the older times is the more satisfactorily authenticated, as well as the more probable relation.

These tribes did not dwell in cities, nor had they any fixed abiding place, but wandered through various parts of the African deserts with their camels and tents, which they removed as the seasons demanded, and as the requirements of time and place made needful. They thus went wandering, as chance directed, from province to province and from country to country, until they finally made their abode in the deserts of Africa: in that part namely which men call the Upper, or Interior Africa, and the cause whereby they were subsequently induced to abandon those deserts is related by their historians in the following terms.

They tell us that a man named Yahye Ben Ibrahim, of the Cabila of Gudala, having proceeded in pilgrimage to the city of Mecca in Arabia, paid a visit on his return to that of Cairvan, which is at the distance of three days' journey from Tunis, and to the south of the last-named city. Here Yahye Ben Ibrahim, as he delayed for some time to examine the remarkable objects presented by the place, its Aljamas, its schools, and other institutions of similar character, met an Alfaki of the Aljama, who was called Abu Amram, a native of the city of Fez, and conversing with this man, the Faki inquired of the pilgrim from what land he had come, to what nation he belonged, and to which of the four orthodox sects of Islam he was attached. The pilgrim replied that the people of his country possessed neither science nor letters, and had scarcely any religion, still less the knowledge of those sects whereof the Alfaki had spoken; he added that the tribes of his people lived entirely apart from the intercourse of cultivated men, that they dwelt in the midst of deserts, and saw nothing more exalted than herdsmen or a few wandering merchants, whose sole learning consisted in buying and selling and increasing their gains. But that notwithstanding all this, the dwellers in his land and those

abiding in other parts of the desert were not so barbarous and ferocious but that they desired to learn things useful, and would fain know something of letters and religion, being for the most part of good dispositions and very gentle of heart, despite the rustic simplicity of their manners. Yahye Ben Ibrahim concluded by begging the Faki Abu Amram to consider if he had not some one among his disciples who might be willing to go with him into the deserts, there to instruct the people of his country.

Abu Amram replied that he would do what he could in the matter, and did in effect propose it to his disciples; but there was not one among them who was found willing to do as the pilgrim desired; whether because of the distance between Cairvan and the Desert into which they were required to go, or because they dreaded the perils and difficulties of a way so little known, and which a task so arduous presented, we do not find deduced.

Yahye Ben Ibrahim was now about to take his way to the Desert and leave Cairvan, but before his departure Abu Amram gave him certain accounts of a Faki called Abu Izag, who lived in the kingdom of Suez, in the land of Almagreb, and was greatly venerated by the Moslemah for his learning and the purity of his life; insomuch that he would doubtless have influence enough to find among his disciples such a teacher for his people as the pilgrim desired and as those dwellers in the desert needed. Abu Amram furthermore supplied the prilgrim with letters of recommendation to that Alfaki of Suez, requesting him to promote the wishes of Yahye Ben Ibrahim with what diligence he could.

The pilgrim then departed, and presenting his letters to Abu Izag, he was very well received by that Alfaki, who assisted him to terminate the affair in question as he desired, and gave him a master for his people in whom he, Abu Izag, had much confidence. This was Abdallah Ben Yasim, who had studied the sciences at Andalusia for seven years, and was a man of great learning and distinction; nor did he refuse his concurrence in the work proposed, but set forth with Yahye Ben Ibrahim, and they arrived in due time at that part of the desert wherein the tribe of Gudula was making its abode. The master was there very cordially welcomed by all the Cabila; he soon saw himself surrounded by some

seventy Xeques of the most noble in the land; and as the nation was of honourable and humane dispositions, these men all held their learned teacher in the highest esteem, treating him with as much consideration as they would have done had he been the lord and father of them all.

At length Abdallah perceived himself to be in so much authority with them that he ventured to command the arming of the tribe, and sent them forth to make war on a neighbouring Cabila, which was no other than that of Lamtuna. His commands were obeyed with ready submission, and the people acquitted themselves so valorously, that they compelled the Lamtunas also to acknowledge the authority of their Xeque and master, Abdallah Ben Yasim. In like manner, and with the same bravery and good fortune, did they subsequently bring to his obedience all the other Cabilas of the Desert, greatly increasing the power and reputation of the Xeque thereby, as they did likewise the importance of their own tribe of Gudula. Finally, the learned teacher, Abdallah Ben Yasim, was considered to be the sovereign of that tribe, as he was of the tribe of Lamtuna, seeing that the Ameer of the Lamtunies, Abu Yahye Zacaria Ben Omar, had declared himself his disciple, following the counsels of Abdallah Ben Yasim, whether for peace or war, and doing nothing without his approbation.

At no great distance from the tract of country occupied by the Cabila of Lamtuna, there was a rude and wild district consisting principally of a chain of hills, within whose asperities there dwelt certain barbarians who were acquainted with no religion, and whom the Xeque Abdallah Ben Yasim desired to instruct; but they despised his teaching, and paid no regard to his admonitions; whereupon the Xeque commanded that unsparing war should be made on those recusants; and he committed the conduct thereof to the people of Lamtuna, who performed his behests with a ready obedience, which was fully equalled by the bravery and constancy of their demeanour in the battles which ensued.

The Chief, or King of Lamtuna, Abu Zucaria Yahye, went forth against the Hill-people with a thousand cavaliers of his Cabila, and after many skirmishes engaged them in a battle which proved to be a very obstinate and perilous contest. The tribe of Lamtuna were a light and active, but

very powerful and robust race: excessively bold, and well inured to the hardships and exercises of war, they were kept in the constant practice of the same by their almost perpetual struggles with those barbarians of the hills already mentioned, and with other Cabilas who were their enemies. They knew how to range their troops in order of battle, and were accustomed to place in the foremost ranks of their infantry, men who used very long lances, which they fixed in the earth; these foot-soldiers were so resolute and proud that, according to Abu Oveid of Bejer, they were never known to turn their backs on the enemy in any battle, and would always rather die where they stood, than give way or yield a foot of ground to the foe. They would never fly, however vast the multitude of the enemy opposed to them; and this unflinching courage, with their brave determination to conquer, enabled them almost always to make a terrible carnage among the ranks of the foe, insomuch that in these wars with the barbarians, the latter ever lost many more of their numbers in contest with the foot-soldiers than with the cavalry. At a word, the tribe of Lamta remained master of the field on this occasion as on many others, compelling the men of the hills to fly in much disorder, when the victors plundered their tents, and divided among themselves such spoil as they found therein.

This victory cost the Lamtunas a large number of their men, and the Xeque Abdallah Ben Yasim, remarking the courage and steadiness which they displayed in the fight, bestowed on those of the tribe of Lamtuna the name of Murabitines or Almoravides; that is, Men of God, or such as have given themselves spontaneously and of free will to the service of Allah. Considering further the undaunted bravery and steady persistence with which the men of Lamtuna sustained all the hardships incidental to warfare, Abdallah began to think that, with the care and ability which he for his part could bring to the guidance of such warriors, he might be able to make himself master of all Mauritania and the lands of Almagreb. Wherefore, to excite at once their vanity and courage, with the intent to lead them to the attempt which he desired to make, Abdallah Ben Yasim addressed them as follows:—

"Oh noble Almoravides of Lamtuna, yours is the gift of

an invincible constancy, and ye have even now conquered all our enemies. If, then, ye would solemnly devote your energies to the service of God, and to the extension of his holy Law, I see well that you would readily overcome all the difficulties that might present themselves, and would quickly cast behind your backs whatever obstacles you might find on the glorious and laudable path which you must tread to ensure that Paradise which is the certain reward of all who labour for the Law, and which could not fail to crown your good works."

Having thus disposed the hearts of his people to listen to his counsels, the Xeque Abdallah soon persuaded them, by the amenity of his words and by the promise of future happiness, to depart for the deserts, and make war on the men of Barbary, who were their neighbours. They speedily rendered themselves masters of Sigilmesa, Dara and other provinces belonging to the Ameers of Magaraba, who were princes of the tribe of Zeneta, which was then governed by Mesuad Ben Banud Ben Hiazron Ben Falful Alazari.

The people of Lamtuma, led on by their King, the victorious Abu Yahye Zacaria, were joined by those of Usafa and Arafa, when they commenced a war on Mesuad Ben Banud, from whom they took the province of Magaraba, in their first campaign. That district conquered, they passed on to the territory of Dara, of which they likewise made themselves masters. But in a sanguinary encounter which the tribe of Lamta had with that of Gudala, Abu Yahye Zacaria died, fighting as a good soldier should do; yet even this did not prevent his people from obtaining the victory.

The brave Abu Yahye Zabaria being thus slain in battle by those of the Cabila of Gudala, the Xeque Abdallah, by his sovereign authority, elected and named Ameer, a brother of the dead chief, called Abu Bekir son of Omar, who was the son of Tarkit, of the tribe of Zanhaga, and of the ancient blood of Zohair, who was very well received by the people of Lamtuna, from whom he received the oath of allegiance, as he did also from those of Sigilmesa and Dara. The new Ameer Abu Bekir then passed on towards the district of Masamuda, which is on the opposite declivities of the mountains of Daren: there he chose the lands of Agmat, Cilana, and Ezinira, as a commodious abiding-place for his

people; who sat themselves down there in the year of the Hegira 450.*

Now the principal inhabitants of the country, submitting themselves to his obedience, had gone forth to meet Abu Bekir, and that ruler fixed his abode in the city of Veriquia, where he dwelt in company with his Imaum or Xeque, Abdallah Ben Yasim. But the latter could not rest without attempting new conquests; and although he appeared to advise the making of these acquisitions for Abu Bekir, it was in fact for himself that he designed the benefit, since the real power and sovereignty were in truth vested in his person, and the essential force of the government lay in the hands of the Imaum Abdallah, the appearance of authority being all that was left to Abu Bekir. It chanced, then, that as Abdallah, having made an incursion on the district of Tamisna, was seeking to subject the natives of that tract to his rule, he found himself received by those men, who were Moslemah, in a manner very different from his previous experience as respected other nations; nay, in the predatory visit he then made to them, they struck him through with a lance, and he died.

The King Abu Bekir felt much grief for the loss of his Imaum, but he was crafty enough to secure to himself the possession of the whole authority which he had before divided with the Teacher; he made himself master of the city of Agmat, in Veriquia, and by degrees contrived to obtain the unquestioned lordship of the whole district, to the different parts of which he sent his governors and administrators, retaining the inhabitants in his obedience by the fears which he inspired, seeing that his forces were constantly increased by new arrivals from the deserts, and were always maintained by him in well-appointed and formidable bands. Nay the number of the warriors became at length so great that it surpassed that of the inhabitants, and in the year 460 it was found that the people had no longer space wherein to abide, when a change became indispensable.

Then the Xeques and principal inhabitants presented themselves to the King Abu Bekir, describing the difficulties that all were enduring from that cause, and declaring,

* A.D. 1058.

in the name of the commonwealth, that these difficulties, becoming every day more pressing, could no longer be supported. The King replied, saying, that their complaints were just, and that since they found their present dwelling-place too closely confined, and their abode therein too incommodious, they would do well to choose a convenient site whereon they might build another city, in which they with his people could dwell without restraint.

The Xeques considering that this reply was not unsatisfactory, proceeded to the selection of a site, and having unanimously agreed on a place, called Eilana or Heimara, they came to make known their decision to Abu Bekir, to whom they said, "Oh Ameer, we have now discovered a convenient place, and have chosen it according to thy desire and our own: it is in the district of Eilana, and there will we build our city."

The King Abu Bekir Ben Omar then mounted his horse, and followed the guides, with whom went forth all the people, whether of the Multimines or Masamudes, then dwelling on the further side of the mountains of Daren. They thus arrived altogether at a grove and plain, on which now stands the city of Marruecos,* but where was then no other inhabitant than the lions, tigers, mountain goats, ostriches, and other animals such as are wont to be found in desert-places, seeing that the plain then brought forth nothing but the buckthorn, wild bay-tree, and other uncultivated shrubs. But with all this the site pleased the king, who perceived it to have many qualities rendering it proper for the foundation of a city; as, for example, an abundance of pasture for the flocks that must feed around, with a fresh coolness rendering the air very agreeable.

They soon began to trace out the future streets and squares for markets, plans for houses and public buildings were also drawn, and the assembled people set joyfully to work at the necessary preparations. But no man yet thought of surrounding the new city with a wall and towers, these having been afterwards erected by Aly Hassan, second king of the Almoravides, as we shall relate hereafter. The first visit of the King Abu Bekir to the

* Morocco.

spot on which he founded the city of Marruecos was in the year 462.*

Abu Bekir was thus employed in the commencement of his new city and the principal edifices thereof, when he received intelligence from the Cabila of Lamtuna to which he belonged, to the effect that the Cabila of Gudala, with which his own had been at feud from old times, had sallied forth against the Lamtunies, in whose territories they were making grievous ravages. The messengers added that the enmity on both sides had increased to so fierce a hatred as to leave small prospect of the war being terminated in any other manner than in the extermination of one or other of the contending Calibas, Gudala or Lamtuna.

These accounts caused much sorrow to King Abu Bekir, who saw himself compelled to abandon the occupation which then employed him; he appointed as his successor and lieutenant in the place, a cousin of his own, who was called Juzef Ben Taxfin† Ben Ibrahim Ben Tarkit Ben Wez-taktir Ben Mansur Ben Misala Ben Tamim Ben Bagali. He was of the Cabila of Zanhaga, and the ancient blood of Homair, and in the person of his grandfather Ibrahim Ben Tarkit were united the two branches of the family whence proceeded the first Ameers, his predecessors, as already mentioned,—Abu Yahye Zacaria namely, and Abu Bekir.

The Ameer Abu Bekir then divided his whole force into three parts: with two of these he proceeded by forced marches to the succour of his Cabila of Lamtuna, and left the third in Sus Alaksa, to guard the site of the new city, under the command of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin Abu Jacob.

CHAP. X.—Of the Caliphate of Juzef Ben Taxfin.

It will now be desirable that we should give a just idea of the character of this Caliph. Juzef Ben Taxfin Ben Ibrahim Ben Tarkat Ben Mansur Ben Misala Ben Watmeli Ben

* A.D. 1070.

† Taxfin, Texfin, or Taxifin; these forms of the name being used indifferently by the same authors.

Talmeit, was a descendant of the noble race of Homair of Zanhaga, while the mother that bore him was of Lamtuna: she was called Fatima, and was a daughter of Omar Ben Syr Ben Abi Bekir Ben Yahye Ben Wah Ben Wataktir. The complexion of Juzef Ben Taxfin was a dark brown, but he had comely features, and was of good stature, although his figure was slight; his eyes were large and brilliant, they were also well opened; he had strong and bushy eyebrows; his beard was handsome; the moustache of his upper lip turned back, and was not so dark as his hair. He had a pleasing voice, and to these, his external qualities, he added a kind heart and generous mind. Juzef Ben Taxfin was a just and prudent governor of his people, brave and formidable to his enemies; in war he was ever mindful of the security and defence of his states, and was renowned on his frontiers for the bold determination with which he repelled all aggression. A lover of war, which he conducted with infinite intelligence and much good fortune, he had, nevertheless, the most valuable qualities of a peaceful ruler. He was liberal in the extreme to others, although grave and austere in his own habits, paying no regard to the decoration of his person, and wearing only the simplest vestments, but adjusting these with the utmost propriety, and with a rigid attention to cleanliness. He was exceedingly temperate and moderate in the enjoyment of pleasure, in whatever form, mild in demeanour and gentle in conversation. The fact that Allah had created him for great things was nevertheless manifest in his whole person, which suited well with the destiny of him who was to bring over to Islam so large a part of the world. The vestments of Juzef Ben Taxfin were of wool, nor did he ever use any of other textures; his food was bread and the flesh of camels, or other powerful animals, but he ate only in very small quantities, and never in his life was he known to complain of the mode of preparation of the meats set before him, or of the quantity and quality of the same. He was of a most equal temper, and in all his days had never endured any sickness, until that malady had declared itself, by the agency whereof it pleased God to remove him to the enjoyments and recompenses of another life: in his case these last were without doubt very glorious, since he had constantly

laboured for the propagation of Islam, and had caused the knowledge and adoration of the power of Allah to be extended through many lands. By means of Juzef Ben Taxfin the praises of God were made to sound in Spain as well as in Almagreb, from more than one thousand Alminbares and nine hundred Alminars. The empire of this sovereign extended over widely separated regions, his authority being acknowledged from Medina Fraga, near the confines of Afranc—which is France—and the extreme east of Spain, even to the ultimate limits of Santerin and Alisbona, which lie on the shores of the Great Ocean, or to the west of that country, comprising a length of more than three and thirty days' journey, with a width of almost equal extent.

In the West of Africa the dominions of Juzef Ben Taxfin were also wide, extending from Gezira Becri Margata to Tangiers, nay even to the extremity of the ulterior Negritia, and to the Gold Mountains in the land of the blacks. All this without the interposition of any power or lordship opposed to or distinct from his own, for Juzef Ben Taxfin had none such in all his states.

The commands of this monarch and the enforcement of his will were ever in harmony with the voice of God, and in conformity with the sacred injunctions of his law. In the tributes and contributions which he exacted, Juzef held close to the legal restrictions and traditions of Islam, as he did in respect to the burthens which he laid on the Infidels, according to the terms in which each had made his submission. With the utmost liberality there was nevertheless so exact an order and so wise an economy in all his regulations, that after the death of this Caliph the sum of three hundred thousand arrobas* in silver was found in his treasury, with five thousand and forty arrobas in gold, all in doubloons. He administered his states with the most impartial justice, but that justice was tempered by mercy. Kind and friendly towards all beneath his sway, he more particularly honoured and showed respect to the Alfakees and Alimies,† whom he admitted to his most intimate society, and whose counsels he followed in all his resolves, affixing a high value to their

* The arroba is a weight of somewhat more than 2 lbs. avoirdupoise.
† Priests and learned men.

words, and listening with care and profit to the opinions of those pious and learned persons. He was of sound understanding and excellent disposition; modest and humble, all the virtues appeared to have been accumulated in his person, and, as was well remarked by the accomplished Doctor Muhamad Aben Amid, it seemed that in him each of these virtues was labouring in emulation with the others to ascertain which of them should arrive at the highest perfection.*

Juzef Ben Taxfin was born at Velad Sahara in the year 400, and his death took place in the year 500; so that he attained the age of one hundred years. He passed the greater part of his life in Almagreb, and abode there more especially from the time when he succeeded to his cousin, the Ameer Abu Bekir Ben Omar, to the destined moment when the latter departed to the mercy of God, which was a period of forty-three years; but he then remained in Andalusia, from the period when he deprived the Ameers of Spain, more especially the King of Granada, Abdallah Ben Balkin, of their sovereignty, until his own departure from life, which was a period of seventeen years, as we shall show hereafter. His principal Vizier or chancellor was his son-in-law, Syr Ben Abi Bekir, and the sons who succeeded him after his death were Temin, Abu Bekir, Liman, Ibrahim, Cuba, and Rakia.

From the moment when Juzef Ben Taxfin had been left in charge of the government and caliphate of Marruecos, with that of the provinces of Western Africa, as the Naib or lieutenant of his cousin Abu Bekir, he set himself to rule those committed to him with infinite prudence and ability, soon becoming so perfectly acceptable to the people, as well as the army, that he could not but perceive before him the prospect of an eventual exaltation to the absolute sovereignty of the State, whatever might have been the purposes entertained by his cousin as to the succession.

The progress of the new city received his particular attention, and purchasing a piece of land in the immediate vicinity of the same, he then caused his pavilion of skins to

* It is to be regretted that the life of this ruler does not justify the praises here given him, and which would appear to be extracted from the eulogistic effusions of some contemporary author.—TR.

be raised, that he might thus more effectually superintend the works, and enforce the necessity of activity among the people. And here his first care was to erect a mosque for prayer, but that accomplished, he next constructed an Alcazaba or small fortress, which was called the Alcazar of the Rock: this he destined to contain his arms and principal treasures. In the labours of the mosque Juzef Ben Taxfin took part in person with his own hands; he prepared the clay for the bricks in company with the other labourers, thereby presenting an example of zeal and moderation to all who surrounded him. May Allah reward every man who shall imitate him in works of equal merit!

And this town, thus commenced, is now the noble city of Morocco, standing in a delicious site, with a rich abundance of pastures within convenient distance; a soil yielding fruits of every kind, and a plentiful supply of water,—insomuch that whoever desires to possess a well has but to dig to a slight depth, when he finds a pure and sweet water in sufficiency. The place was thus inhabited even from the first by a large number of people, who gladly made their dwellings on a spot so pleasant; they also began to erect the walls, but these were not completed in the life of Juzef Ben Taxfin; they were finished by his son in the space of eight months, and this was done in the year 526, but the walls then raised have since that time been much extended by his successors in the state. They were more particularly enlarged and strengthened by the Ameer Amumenin Abu Juzef Jacob Almanzor Ben Juzef Ben Abdelmumin Ben Aly Alcumi, Prince of the Almohades, at the time when that dynasty made itself master of Almagreb, but the city did not cease to be head and chief, the capital and principal town of the empire of the Almoravides, while that family reigned. Nay, it also retained the supremacy during nearly all the time of the Almohade supremacy, and until one of the princes of that dynasty removed his court to the noble and ancient city of Fez; as we shall see at a more advanced period of our history.

After the lapse of a year from the time when Abu Bekir Ben Omar departed from the land, Juzef Ben Taxfin had so largely increased his power and greatness that on making the review of his forces he found no less than forty thousand warriors

under his command. With that host he proceeded to Wadi-Mulua where he divided his army into five parts, four of which he committed to the charge of four generals, who were Muhamad Ben Temin Agederati, Amran Ben Zuleyman El Mazuki, Modare El Tekleti, and Syr Ben Abi Bekir El Lamtuni: to each of whom he gave the command of five thousand men of his own Cabila, furnishing all with exact instructions and regulations for the conduct of the same in the war then to be waged against Almagreb and Magaraba, the people of those parts having been incited to opposition of his power by the Beni Yaferian and other Cabilas of Barbary. The remainder of his force he led in person, and in a short time he brought the whole land of Almagreb to his obedience, subjecting tribe after tribe and province after province, with little difficulty and no resistance on the part of the dwellers therein. Nearly all the Cabilas came readily to proffer their allegiance, and entering Medina Agmat, Juzef Ben Taxfin there solemnized his nuptials with the beautiful Zainab, whom he took from his brother Abu Bekir Ben Omar, because he loved her tenderly and perceived that he was equally beloved.*

We find it related of Juzef Ben Taxfin that he once bought a large number of slaves, natives of Guinea, who were sold to him by certain merchants carrying on traffic with the people of Guinea in a city called Gasza, which lies deep in the centre of the deserts. It is furthermore said that these slaves had in old times been Christians, but that in their intercourse with the men of Barbary, whether from the evils and violence of war, or from some other cause is not known, they had gradually lost their religion. For the furtherance of his plans and the execution of certain purposes which he entertained, Juzef now sent these black slaves to the coasts of Andalusia, where he caused them to be exchanged against a large number of captive Christian boys whom he received from the people of Andalusia. The youths thus acquired he then caused to be instructed in the

* The naïveté with which this notable wrong, committed by a man declared to be perfect, is related by the old Arabian writers, without the slightest intimation of disapproval, is not a little curious, and loses much in translation.—Tr.

Law, and at the proper time he gave them arms, having likewise had them carefully instructed in warlike exercises, and rendered accomplished horsemen; when he raised them to the dignity of knighthood. Thenceforward Juzef Ben Taxfin kept two hundred and fifty of their number constantly about his person, but selecting those thus distinguished very carefully; he accepted only such as displayed the most remarkable dexterity in the management of their horses, and the use of their arms. He likewise formed a troop of negro youths, chosen from the most promising of the slaves purchased as above mentioned, to whom he gave arms and horses, and of these also he kept a body of two thousand horsemen always about him, choosing in like manner those only who were remarkable for their dexterity in arms as well as for their bravery.

On the Jews of his states, who were numerous and rich, Juzef Ben Taxfin laid a very heavy tribute, and thereby amassed large sums of money, which aided him to extend his power. The Tribes and Cabilas acknowledging his rule were at length so numerous that, in the year 454, he was able to assemble a powerful host, and at that time he sounded his trumpets, raised his banners, and having passed his forces in review, it was found that he had no less than one hundred thousand cavaliers, all men of admirable qualities for war; they were chiefly from the tribes of Zanhaga, Gezula, Musamada, and Zeneta, with those of the Albazases and Arramates, who were equally brave and hardy.

With this army he departed from Morocco, and directed his march towards Fez, when there came to his encounter the Cabilas of that land, from Zuaga, Lamait, Lunait, Sadina, Sedrana, Maguila, Behlula, and Mediona, with other tribes from many other places, all presenting themselves to the battle with extraordinary resolution. The conflict which then ensued was a very obstinate and sanguinary one, but those Cabilas were defeated by Juzef Ben Taxfin, who routed them with horrible slaughter, and all finally fled. They then took refuge for the most part among the fortresses or within the walls of Medina Mediona, but the Almoravides forced their way into that city sword in hand. The troops sacked and plundered the place, in which they put to death four thousand men, and having seized the Walies, the conquering

army next proceeded to Medina Fez, where their leader, Juzef Ben Taxfin, remained until he had subjugated and brought to his obedience all the tribes who made their abode on those confines.

The Ameer Abu Bekir, cousin of Juzef Ben Taxfin, had meanwhile taken vengeance on the tribe of Gudala, and had put an end to the misunderstandings which he had found prevailing among his kindred and allies of Lamtuna. These things done, he returned to Mauritania in the year 465, and approaching Agmat he had not yet entered the city before he was informed of the mighty power and aggrandizement of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin, with the proud thoughts entertained by that ruler, and how he had gained the hearts of all the people. The Ameer Abu Bekir was furthermore made aware of the manner in which Juzef had fortified the country, and that he had strengthened himself in such sort as clearly to make manifest the truth that he desired to have no companion in the empire.

It happened, moreover, that certain cavaliers, who had gone from the camp of Abu Bekir to see the city of Morocco and to mark the progress of the buildings, had returned full of admiration at the manner in which Juzef Ben Taxfin had made all his arrangements, and of astonishment at the marks of prudent foresight, as well as of vast power, which they had everywhere perceived. They had also heard wondrous things related of the manner in which Juzef proceeded with his warriors, of the great liberality he displayed towards them, and the rich gifts of horses, arms, costly vestments, and slaves, which he frequently made them, with the promises and hopes of reward held out to all who entered his service. These discourses, describing these things, rang through the camp; and the hearers of these relations, as well as their narrators, praised all the splendid qualities thus attributed to Juzef Ben Taxfin, whom they exalted to the skies.

Hearing all this, Abu Bekir became convinced that the ambitious determination of his cousin to retain the sovereignty in his own hands was irrevocable. But, although he had thus lost all hope of reigning as he had previously done in those states, he yet concealed his indignation, and wrote letters to Juzef, appointing a time for their

mecting, without expressing any part of the anger which he felt.

The day fixed on having arrived, Juzef Ben Taxfin came forth, surrounded by his large household and a vast crowd of slaves, with an army of no inconsiderable strength as his escort. He met his cousin in the road-way between Agmat and Morocco, each having come about four miles and a half, since the distance between the two places is nine miles. Abu Bekir and Juzef were both on horseback, and the former saluted his cousin with a courtesy which he rarely extended to any man. They then both alighted, and took their seats on an Albornoz or wide mantle of woollen stuff, which had been extended for that purpose; from which circumstance the group of trees where this meeting took place was thenceforth called "the Grove of the Albornoz."

Abu Bekir was greatly amazed at the majesty and regal grandeur exhibited by Juzef Ben Taxfin, not only in the number of his cavaliers, the order of his squadrons, and the division of his tents, but also in his person and the expression of his countenance. At the close of the conversation which took place between them, Abu Bekir uttered the following words, but with a dissembling mind:—"Oh, my brother Juzef—for as such I hold thee, since thou art the son of my own uncle, and our kindred is of so close a tie—here do I find none who is able to maintain the empire of Almagreb as thou canst do; nay, there cannot be any who so well merits to be lord over all as thyself, since to no one can that supremacy belong of better right. It is true that I cannot myself remain here—I must return to the desert and dwell therein; nor hath my present coming any other end than that of declaring to thee my resolution in that matter, and of announcing my will that thou shouldst be lord and master of these States; that done, I repair to the desert, which is the proper dwelling of our brethren and forefathers."

To these words Juzef Ben Taxfin replied with much humility, and gave his cousin thanks. The two sovereigns then called to their presence the nobles of Lamtuna and great personages of the kingdom, with the Walies and Xeques of the Masamudas, with whom were also admitted

the Alchatibes and Xuhudes*, accompanied by a certain number of the people, in whose presence writings were prepared attesting the cession thus made by Abu Bekir, and his voluntary renunciation of the States of Morocco, with all the remaining portions of Almagreb, in favour of his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin. That done, all rose, and the witnesses were dismissed, yet not without secret pain and regret on the part of Abu Bekir, whose apparent satisfaction in the arrangement was but feigned, and assembling his attendants, he returned with a grieving heart to his pavilion, which had been established at Agmat.

Juzef Ben Taxfin also departed, taking the way to Morocco, with his army and many followers. Arrived at his abode, he prepared a rich and distinguished present for his cousin; and among other costly rarities, that gift contained the objects hereafter enumerated: first were one hundred and twenty thousand gold doubloons made of the finest metal that could be procured, next came seventy horses of the most noble race, twenty-five of this number being covered with magnificent caparisons and harness, of which the borderings and decorations were of beaten gold; to these were added seventy swords, twenty of which had the handles in gold of the finest workmanship, while of the remainder the handles were of silver, also richly chased; one hundred and fifty carefully-chosen beasts of burden; one hundred costly turbans, with four hundred more of the manufacture of Sûs; one hundred vestments bordered with the finest lamb-skins; two hundred white mantles with borders of different colours; one thousand pieces of fine linen for head-dresses, and two hundred pieces of the finest quality known; seven hundred cloaks for outer wear, partly white and partly in colours, being such as are used by the tribe of Lamtuna; two hundred and fifty vestments of scarlet, and seventy mantles of a thick, and yet very fine, stuff, to preserve the wearer from the rain: to all this were added twenty female slaves, all white and of extraordinary beauty, with one hundred and fifty slave-girls, of black complexion, but of choice and comely form; ten pounds of aromatic woods from the

* Xuhudes: men learned in the law.

Indies, all of the sweetest and most fragrant odour; five packets of the finest Amizcle or musk; two pounds of amber; fifteen pounds of camphor and algalia, or the perfume of the civet: a large herd of cows, and one of sheep, were also in that princely gift, with many loads of wheat and barley.

Abu Bekir is said to have been gratified by the rich present, but instantly distributed the whole among the cavaliers of his train. He then withdrew to the desert, according to some writers, and engaging in a war with the Negro tribes, lost his life in that contest, at the end of three years from the time here in question. These writers add that his cousin Juzef Ben Taxfin paid him the attention of yearly sending him a gift of equal value with the one described above, until the time of his death. But there are other authorities who relate the close of this affair in a different manner, and they tell us that Abu Bekir repented him of his abdication, and attempting to depose Juzef, was conquered by that prince, who took possession of his city and caused him to be put to death. They add, that his army then retreated to Medina Safar, where they maintained themselves for some time; but Juzef finally storming the place, then beheaded the chiefs of the council, who were the sons of Mesaud El Megaravi, and had made themselves masters of the city and its Comarcas. These things accomplished, Juzef Ben Taxfin is then declared to have directed his march upon Fez, which offered so effectual a resistance, that he had held the place closely besieged for an entire year before he could force an entrance, which he finally succeeded in obtaining in the year 455, when he appointed a Wali of the tribe of Lamtuna to govern the city in his name.

All being tranquilly arranged in that quarter, Juzef Ben Taxfin next proceeded to Velad Gomara, where the Wali had risen in rebellion. This Wali was Mansur Ben Hemad, who attempted to hold the town as those of Fez had done; but Juzef took it by storm, when he immediately commanded that Mansur and his partizans should be put to death.

In the same year 455, the Ameer Almahedi Ben Juzef El Cazneti was proclaimed lord of Velad Mekinesa, but at once resigned himself to the obedience of Juzef Ben Taxfin, who

treated him with infinite generosity, confirming him in his lordship, and requiring only that he should serve with a certain number of troops in the war which Juzef Ben Taxfin had then undertaken against Velad Almagreb and the tribes of the neighbouring Comarcas.

In pursuance of that agreement, the Ameer Almahedi Ben Juzef prepared his people, and went forth, as directed by Juzef Ben Taxfin, against Medina Auxa: but when this became known to the Magaravi leader, even Temim, son of Mansur, the rebel chief of the city of Fez, he became alarmed at the great increase of power constantly accruing to Juzef Ben Taxfin and the Almoravides, and fearing for his own life, he assembled the forces of Magarava, with those of the Zenete Cabilas, all which he led forth to the encounter of the Ameer Almahedi.

The hosts met accordingly, and were soon engaged in a sanguinary and obstinate battle, wherein Almahedi Ben Juzef was defeated and lost his life, dying with sword in hand, after fighting with the bravery of a lion: his troops were then totally routed and dispersed; which done, Temim Ben Mansur cut off the head of Almahedi and sent it to El Barqueti, the lord of Cebta, who was his father-in-law.

The defeat and death of their Ameer caused great sorrow to the people of Mekinesa, who made their misfortunes known to the King Juzef Ben Taxfin, offering him at the same time the dominion of their country, and inviting him to become their sovereign. The proposal was accepted by that ruler, who immediately despatched a force against the Magaravi Temim Ben Mansur, lord of Fez, making incursions on his territories, cutting up his fields, and harassing his subjects with perpetual inroads.

But after a certain time, the lord of Fez perceived that his people were becoming weary of the continued attacks to which they were subjected, and of the privations which were the result. He found the discontent of his subjects increase as the numbers they lost in the various skirmishes became more and more considerable: they suffered also from the want of water; and their chief determined to make a great effort for their release. Gathering whatever force he could muster from Magarava and Beni Yafarin, he thereupon sallied forth, with a considerable host, to try his fortune

once more against the rising star of the Almoravides: the battle commenced accordingly, and soon became one of horrible carnage, wherein the leader, Temim Ben Manser, and the greater part of his people, died fighting bravely, as good men should do.

Temim Ben Manser having fallen, his place was taken by Alcasem Ben Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Ibrahim Ben Muza Ben Abi Alafia, El Zenete, who assumed the command of the troops and the government of Fez without delay. A second battle was then fought on the shores of the Guadisifir; and in that encounter, which was a truly terrible one, the Almoravides were totally d feated, the loss being very great on both sides, more especially among the cavalry.

The news of this disaster were quickly borne to Juzef Ben Taxfin, who was then occupied with the siege of Hisn Mahedi;* but he at once abandoned his attack on that fortress to the care of certain among his generals, to whom he left a body of the Almoravides to continue the same. That siege was a wonderfully long one, nine years having elapsed before the Almoravide forces entered the place, which they did by conditions of surrender in the year 465.

Juzef himself departed, as we have said, and first repaired to Beni Morasan, the Wali of which place had rebelled, and was then with his people in full insurrection. He resisted for some time; but Juzef finally defeated him, killed many of his partizans, and succeeded in tranquillizing the district. The king then proceeded to Fendeleva, and conquered all that country: this was in the year 456; and Juzef Ben Taxfin, next passing to Velad Barga, entered that city in the year 458.

In the year 460, the same sovereign made the conquest of Velad Gomara, from Araif to Tangiers; and in the year 462 he directed his march on Medina Fez, before which city he sat down with his whole army. The siege was then continued with great energy, and having finally entered the place sword in hand, King Juzef slew all the people of Magaraba whom he found therein, with those of Mekineza, Beni Yahfaran, and the Cabilas of Zeneta, not sparing a single

* The fortress of Magredi.

life, insomuch that an infinite multitude perished in Medina Fez, the streets and squares of the place being filled with the corpses of the slain. The king likewise put to death more than three thousand men of the Comarcas neighbouring to Fez, with many more from Cairvan, and not a few Andalusians, who were also among the defenders. Those who had taken flight at an earlier period of the carnage were more fortunate, and made good their escape, directing their steps to the confines of Teliman.

This was the second great conquest of Juzef Ben Taxfin, whose solemn entrance into the city of Fez took place on Thursday, the 2nd day of Giumada Segunda, in the year 462. He had no sooner obtained possession of the place than he commanded that it should be fortified, and caused the wall to be cast down, by which the Barrio or quarter of the Andalusians had originally been separated from that occupied by the people of Cairvan, as hath been heretofore described, thereby reducing the two Barrios to one large quarter or district. He also caused mosques to be constructed in every division of the town; and if in any great street or square there was found to be no mosque, he compelled the inhabitants of the district to build one. Juzef Ben Taxfin likewise erected or restored the Aljamas, and built exchanges for the merchants, with great Caravanserais for the same, and markets for the convenience of all men remaining in Fez to see that all these labours were duly proceeded with, until the moon of Safer, in the year 463, when he departed and repaired to Velad Muluya, where he took possession of the fortress called Felat. In the year 464, the conquering monarch was engaged in extensive preparations with the firm resolve to subjugate the remaining parts of Almagreb by force of arms; but the Xeques of the Zeneta tribe, with those of Masamuda, Gomara, and other Cabilas of Barbary, came to submit themselves without further contest, proclaiming Juzef Ben Taxfin their lord.

CHAP. XI.—Of the manner in which the Almoravide Juzef ben Taxfin continued his conquests.

By their submission, as above mentioned, the tribes obtained their pardon from the victorious sovereign, and he left them in the possession of their lands. He now passed through all his dominions in Almagreb, accompanied by a large body of troops, enquiring into the condition of the people in every part, and taking such measures as he found needful for ensuring the good government of all: nay, to effect this last-mentioned object ever appeared to Juzef Ben Taxfin the most important of his undertakings, and the first duty of a prince.

In the year 465, Juzef obtained possession of the city of Aldanah in Velad Tangier, which he took by force of arms and entered by storm. He also occupied Mount Aloudaun, which he took in like manner at this time. In the year 467, the king made himself master of Gebal Gieza, Beni Macoud, and Beni Rahina, where he put to death much people. The lands of Almagreb were by his command divided into provinces during the course of the same year.

In the moon of Dylhagia, also of the year 467, the star Almekak made its appearance in Almagreb, and was likewise seen in the country of Spain.

Now Juzef Ben Taxfin gave the government of Velad Almagreb to Yezed Ben Abi Bekir; that of Mudain Mekineza, Velad Meklala, and Velad Fezaun, he gave to Omar Ben Zuleiman; Medina Fez and its Comarcas he bestowed on Davoud Ben Aixa; and Sigilmesa, with Daraa, he entrusted to his own son Temim, on whom he furthermore conferred the government of Medina Agmat, Morocco, Velad Asous, a part of Velad Masamuda, and Velad Temizana.

It was at this time that the King of Seville, even Muhamad Aben Abed Almutamed, having been made acquainted with the vast power exercised by Juzef Ben Taxfin in Africa, and with the victories obtained by that monarch, desired to secure his friendship; and this he did the more earnestly because it appeared to him that if he could prevail on the African prince to occupy the arms of Muhamad Barqueti of Ceuta, and those of the rulers in the

district of Tangiers, he should himself be thereby enabled to complete his conquests in Andalusia with the greater facility. He therefore wrote letters to Juzef Ben Taxfin, requesting his alliance, and exhorting the African sovereign to aid him with his power in the defence of Islam; but King Juzef replied, that he could not pass into Spain until he had made himself master of Cebta and Tangiers; wherefore, as it was precisely the object of Aben Abed that Juzef Ben Taxfin should make war on the lords of those cities and their Comarcas, he wrote again to offer assistance in that war, promising to attack Muhamad El Barqueti from the coast, provided Juzef could come against them from the desert, and so take care that the rulers of Cebta and Tangiers should be effectually surrounded.

All this was then accomplished as designed, the people of Aben Abed, King of Seville, putting to sea as he had proposed, and assisting Juzef Ben Taxfin to occupy the cities of Cebta and Tangiers, which he did in the year 470.

Now for this war of Cebta and Tangiers, Juzef Ben Taxfin had summoned to his aid the forces of Jaleh Ben Amran, who appeared with twelve thousand well-selected horsemen of the Almoravides, reinforced by twenty thousand men from the tribes of Almagreb and Zeneta. When these troops arrived on the borders of Tangiers, there went forth to their encounter the Hagib, Socra El Barqueti, with such strength as he could make. That general was now of great age, he had lived more than one hundred years, yet he bravely exclaimed, "By Allah! while I am in life, the trumpets of the Almoravides must not be heard in Cebta."

The two armies met in battle on the banks of the Guadimena, when the conflict, which was a very sanguinary one, was maintained with a superhuman valour on both sides; but the brave old Socra died with his sword in his hand, when his troops fell into disorder, and fled routed from the field. The Almoravides then continued their march towards Tangiers, which they took, but the Hagib Dhialdola Yahye, son of the noble Socra, still remained in Cebta. The victory obtained in the Guadimena by the troops of Saleh Ben Amran was duly made known to Juzef Ben Taxfin, to whom that intelligence was highly acceptable.

In the year 472, Juzef sent his general Mezdeli to make

the conquest of Medina Telinzan, and that commander repaired to the city above-named accordingly with twenty thousand Almoravide troops. They took the place with but little delay, defeating and slaying the Ameer of Telinzan, even Yala Ben Yala. That done, Mezdeli returned to Morocco, where the King Juzef then was, and into which city the successful general entered with his victorious army in the year 473.

In that year the impress stamped on the coined money was changed; Juzef Ben Taxfin then inscribing his own name thereon. The same year beheld the conquests of the cities of Agersif and Melila, with that of the whole territory of Araif; Medina Tekrur was also taken at this time, when the walls were razed and the city destroyed; nor was it ever again rebuilt.

At the commencement of the year 474, the city of Wahida rebelled against the power of Juzef Ben Taxfin; but it was taken by storm. In this year the king likewise subjugated the lands and tribes of Beni Barnetin, when he beheaded the Xeques who had been the leaders of the conquered Cabilas. He then proceeded against Telidzan, which he took for the second time. That conquest was followed by those of Medina Tunis and Medina Wahran, with that of Gebal Guacasris and all the east country, even to Gezair. After this the King Juzef Ben Taxfin returned to Morocco, which city he entered in the moon of Rebie Segunda, of the year 475.*

In the same year, Juzef once more received letters from Almutamed Aben Abed, King of Seville, wherein that sovereign entreated his assistance, and sought to obtain his friendship; when Juzef promised to pass into Spain so soon as he had freed his hands from the war of Cebta, with which they were then occupied.

It was at this time that Alfonso Ben Ferdeland,† King of the Christians, directed his march against Andalusia, into which country he poured an immense host of warriors gathered from the Infidel bands of Afranc (which is France)

* A.D. 1082: or, as other computators have it, 1085.

† Ferdinand; whom the Arabic authors call indifferently Ferdiland, Ferdeland, and Ferdanun.

their troops having joined those of Galelikia* and Castille, as had also the banners of the Albakenses, who are the dwellers at the foot of those mountains which separate Spain from the land of Afranc. With these forces Alfonso took his way towards Saragossa, burning the towns through which he passed, cutting up the cultivated fields, and putting the inhabitants of all to the edge of the sword. The people fled before his troops in terror, and on every side there arose the wail of death and desolation, seeing that Alfonso Ben Ferdiland spared the life of none but those who were unable to oppose him. The brave King of Saragossa was unable to resist this torrent; and all Spain now beheld itself inundated by the furious bands of the Infidel, who were led on by merciless tyrants, cruelly oppressing the unhappy Moslemah of every province in the land.

When the Ameers of Spain beheld that spectacle, they were at length compelled to open their eyes to the true state of things, and they perceived but too clearly that Alfonso Ben Ferdeland would quickly find means to accomplish all his designs, unless they on their parts could oppose some more effectual resistance to his forces than they had hitherto been able to bring against them.

We have already related the fact that Abul Walid Albage, Cadi of Cordova and Governor of that city for Aben Abed King of Seville, had invited all the Ameers to send their Alimes, Alfakees, and Cadies, from the various Aljamas of Spain to a council to be held in the capital of Aben Abed; these ambassadors assembling accordingly in the city of Seville, whither they had been convoked by the Cadi of Cordova aforesaid, in concert with his master, Aben Abed the king.

The danger of universal ruin with which they were threatened was then discussed between the grave men forming that conference, when all were of opinion that letters should be written to every Ameer of Spain, exhorting all to the common defence of the country against the Christians, and calling upon every ruler to instruct the Walies and Alcaides of the cities and fortress on the frontiers, to the

* Gallicia.

same effect. All replied immediatedly, declaring with one accord that a Sacred War must instantly be published among the faithful as undertaken against Alfonso Ben Ferdiland; but at the same time these Ameers of Spain had so little confidence in the efficiency of their own resources, that they likewise agreed to send messengers to the Prince of the Almoravides, even Juzef Ben Taxfin, entreating him to pass over into Spain with a strong body of troops for the purpose of joining with them in the Algihed or Holy War about to commence.

All were of accord as to the necessity for this step, with the sole exception of Abdallah Ben Zagut, governor of Malaga for Aben Abed, King of Seville, and that Wali opposed the same with the utmost constancy, declaring that it was not expedient to bring the Almoravide Moslemah into Spain, they being a people accustomed only to the sandy wastes and deserts of Africa; he added, that to invite them into the land would be equivalent to the admission therein of the fiercest lions and tigers produced by those regions; that he could not give his trust to those African Moslemah, and that if their King Juzef Ben Taxfin did succeed in breaking the chains which Alfonso Ben Ferdiland was fastening around them, yet it was much to be feared that the conqueror would then lay others upon them, which they might find yet more weighty, and more difficult of removal. Abdallah Ben Zagut then exhorted the assembled counsellors to consider in how short a time Juzef Ben Taxfin had subjugated the cities of Almagreb and deprived of their liberty the numerous tribes of those regions, with all the most powerful Cabilas of Alkibla* and Sus Alaksa. He declared that the most advisable step to be then taken was, for the Spanish sovereigns to form a true and sincere union among themselves, and forgetting the discords which had been the one great cause of the ruin by which they were menaced, join all their forces in a well-sustained contest with Alphonso Ben Ferdiland; which, if they would do, renouncing all particular interests, and thinking only of the common weal, it was certain that they would prove superior to the Christians who were assailing them; nay, would cer-

* Alkibla, or Alquibla: the South.

tainly be invincible, provided only that every Ameer would sincerely support and assist all the others. In conclusion, the wise and upright Abdallah reminded his hearers of those contentions which had caused their present woes, affirming that they all well knew the strife they had occasioned to have brought on the decadence of the Mosleman power, and imploring them to let that knowledge now have its due weight in their counsels.

But this prudent discourse was heard with ill-will, and met with complete disapprobation. Abdallah Ben Zagut was accused of being in confederacy with Alfonso Ben Ferdiland; the Alimes and Alfakirs declaring him to be a bad Mosleman and an enemy of the law. They accordingly excommunicated the noble defender of the truth, and pronounced him to be worthy of death.

The letter of the Ameers was then sent to Juzef Ben Taxfin without further opposition, Aben Abed affixing his seal to it for Seville, Badis or Habus Ben Balkin for Granada, Omar Ben Alaftas for Badaljos, Yahye Almenoun Ben Ismail Ben Dylnoun for Valencia, Moez-Daula for Almeria, Aben Zeidun, the Wali of Tadmir, for that city, with its Comarcas, and Aben Tahir, with other Walies, for the remaining provinces. The letter was signed, at a word, by thirteen Ameers, all joining to entreat with earnest prayers that Juzef Ben Taxfin would be pleased to pass into Spain and liberate them by his power from the proud enemy by whom they were oppressed. The letter furthermore set forth the condition of the country, whose cities it described as burnt and destroyed, while the fields were cut up, and the fortresses occupied by the Christian foe. The latter was furthermore declared to be constantly carrying off the flower of the Mosleman youth into a hard captivity before the eyes of the writers. These words were affirmed to be the supplication of all the followers of the Koran, and Juzef Ben Taxfin was implored to give ear to the lamentations of so many unfortunate creatures, and proceed with his conquering hosts, favoured of Allah, to redeem their lives, since in his generosity alone could they hope to find a certain refuge.

Now Juzef Ben Taxfin was at Medina Fez when this letter was laid before him, and he had there received intelli-

gence from his son Cilman but a short time previously, to the effect that the latter had taken Cebta, which city he had entered as a conqueror in the moon of Rebie Primera, of the year 477.

These news rejoiced King Juzef greatly, and for that reason he received the supplication of the Spanish Ameers with the greater pleasure. He determined in his own mind to pass the sea and enter Spain from Cebta, after he had visited that conquest; but since he was now perfectly tranquil and at peace in his own States, he desired first to take time for the renewal and increase of his armies, and for the due arrangement of other affairs relating to the household of his palace and the officials of his court.

In these dispositions Juzef Ben Taxfin was in no haste to reply to the Ameers of Spain; wherefore, though resolved to enter ultimately on the Algihed or Holy War, he determined to select the moment which might best suit him for doing so: he first wrote letters and sent ambassadors into the Desert to the various Cabilas of Lamtuna, Musafa, Gudala, and others, making known to them how God had enriched him with new kingdoms in the different parts of Almagreb, and how the natives of those lands were obeying and serving him with much good will. He described to those African Cabilas the excellence and abundant fertility of the country, entreating them very warmly to repair to his palace and sovereignty, where he desired to receive them as his friends, and bestow rewards upon the chief among them, as upon his own kindred and the members of his family, proposing to render them all rich and powerful. He added, that to this effect he was reserving for them the most honourable employments about his court, in the provinces of his empire, and in its various cities, with distinguished commands in his armies, to the end that they, being as they were of his own people, might aid him to govern the states which God had confided to his rule.

By this generous invitation vast numbers were attracted to the enjoyment of the advantages proposed to them in terms so flattering, insomuch that no long time had elapsed before whole troops from every tribe of the Desert came flocking to the court of Juzef Ben Taxfin, who received them with all the favour he had given them the right to

expect, conferring on the more distinguished of their number the most honourable charges, and rendering all content, because he employed each man according to the degree of his learning, his worth, and the nobility of his lineage. The king distributed these new comers into the various provinces and cities of his dominions as he had promised them that he would do, in such sort that the lands of Almagreb, half depopulated by the conflicts described, were soon filled by inhabitants who had come from the Cabilas of Lamtuna and other tribes of the Desert.

This, then, was the most prosperous and happy epoch of the Almoravides; the armies of the King Juzef Ben Taxfin increased to a vast extent; the extent of his power and greatness prevailed mightily, and the fame of these was bruited abroad, not in Africa only, but in Spain also; nay, even in the lands lying beyond that country. It thus happened that on the occasion of his having completed the conquests of the kingdoms of Fez, Telinzan, Mekineza, and other states, previously ruled by the Zeneta Ameers, his Xeques and Walies, with the governors of his provinces, and the nobles of his court, came around him in a body, when, being thus congregated, they spake to the following effect, and said,—That although his moderation had hitherto contented itself with the title of Ameer only, yet they now entreated him to change that appellation for the more august one of a Caliph in the Lands of the West, with such other distinguished and honourable titles as were suitable to his great power: they enforced this request by the remark that the name of Ameer, once used exclusively by the Caliphs, had now become a title common to many princes and lords of but slight importance, both in Africa and Spain; wherefore they entreated him very humbly that for the future he would permit them to consider him as the Ameer Amuminin, or supreme ruler and sovereign of the Faithful.

To this Juzef Ben Taxfin replied by the declaration that he would not assume the title they proposed, since his doing so could not be otherwise than displeasing to God, the august appellation they recommended belonging to the Caliphs of the East alone, seeing that these last were the illus-

trious descendants of the Prophet and of the Lords of both the Holy Houses,* whereas he was himself nothing more than a man who gloried in being the follower of the religion of the great Princes and Caliphs of the East.

His Xeques then requested that he would at least permit them to honour him with some title by which he might be known from the other Ameers, and which was his manifest due, since he had of a truth distinguished and raised himself above all the rest by the glory of his exploits. It was then agreed by those present that he should be called Ameer Almuzlimin, or Lord of the Moslemah, to which was subsequently added Nasaradin; and to the end that these titles should be known to all, they were published in the Almimbares and at the Azala of every Juma.

The Xeques and Nobles then assembled decided at the same time on the formularies to be employed in the declarations, petitions, and other papers thenceforward to be addressed to the sovereign, and the decree arranging these matters was conceived in the following terms:—

"In the name of God, the Generous, the Merciful!

"We, the Ameer Almuzlimin Nasaradin Juzef Aben Taxfin, to all the great men and nobles of our kingdoms and states, and to all the tribes whom God in his goodness has been pleased to continue in his holy fear, and guide according to his pleasure. Salutation in the highest prosperity, with the mercy and blessing of God, be with you!

"After thanks offered to God, to whom, as the Giver of every source of victory, all praises are due, we have sent you this letter, written and made known in this our Court of Medina Morocco—which may God preserve!—in the middle of the moon of Muharram, in the year 478; and that which it contains is as follows:—

"Since God has bestowed upon us the mercy of many great victories, very glorious and renowned, and hath enriched us with abundant and manifold favours, as it were with a dew of benefits, at the same time confirming us in the true path of the Law which hath been laid before us by our Prophet, the Liberal, the Selected, we have permitted

* Medina and Mecca.

that ye, when ye speak or write to us, in your letters of supplication, shall call us by that title above expressed, namely, King of the Faithful, and Protector or Defender of the Faith, hereby distinguishing us from the rest of the kings who govern the cabilas or tribes of Africa and of other regions.

"And furthermore we have determined and allowed, that whoever shall speak to us, or demand anything at our hands by writing, shall require it from our high and royal person under the title and name above written. If so it shall please God, who is in truth the Lord of Protection by His liberality. We greet you well."

CHAP. XII.—OF THE ALLIANCE FORMED BY THE MOSLEMAH OF SPAIN AND JUZEF BEN TAXFIN, AMEER OF THE FAITHFUL, AGAINST ALFONSO BEN FERDILAND, KING OF THE CHRISTIANS; OF THE CONQUESTS OF THE LATTER, AND OF HOW, HAVING TAKEN TOLEDO, HE WRITES TO ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE.

KING Juzef Ben Taxfin dismissed the ambassadors of Andalusia highly satisfied with their reception, he having promised to send them aid that should deliver them from the wrongs and oppressions they were suffering, as well as from the perils which were threatening them, and from the strait of which they complained. And these evils were in fact daily becoming more grievous in Spain, seeing that Alfonso Ben Ferdiland was pouring the thunders of his wrath upon the country, and casting the lightnings of desolation over all that owned the Moslemah name. He now seemed to aspire to nothing less than the deprivation of every Ameer in Spain of his lordships, and the rendering all the princes of that country mere tributaries to himself. He treated such as held intercourse with him with great arrogance and haughtiness, as is manifest from the letters which were written to him by King Omar Ben Alaftas, lord of Algarve.

That Ameer was his nearest neighbour, since his lands lay on the frontiers of Gallicia, and he was exposed more than any other of the Moslemah princes to the menaces

of that enemy of Allah, Alfonso Ben Ferdiland. In these letters he complains accordingly of the pride and ambition displayed by Alfonso, and of the purpose of that Christian to render all around him his vassals, and tributary to his power; Alfonso presuming it to be no difficult task to subjugate a district lying so closely upon the borders of his own kingdom. In the terms here following it was, then, that Omar Ben Alaftas replied to the arrogant demands and menaces of Alfonso Ben Ferdiland:—

"Omar Ben Alaftas Almudafar, King of Algarve, to Alfonso, the King of Gallicia:—

"From the powerful King of the Christians there hath come to our hands a letter, wherein he, full of presumption, and of confidence in that greatness which the incomprehensible judgments of God have accorded to him, casteth thunders and lightnings against us, whom he menaceth, without any reason given, with the whole might of his hosts, the terrors of his vast power, and the victory of his arms.

"But Alfonso Ben Ferdiland doth not seem to know or understand that God also still possesses armies wherewith he honours and makes triumphant the truth of His Law and the doctrine of our Prophet Muhamad, favouring and assisting those Moslemah who make just war against the Christians, or who follow the path which God hath laid open to them without signs of fear, knowing and fearing God, and showing marks of contrition for their sins. These things the King Alfonso doth not know or understand, or he would not write as he hath written. For if the face of the Christian now shines and is resplendent, that is by the permission of God, and to the end that the Faithful may be made aware of their late blindness, and may open their eyes to the light: thus distinguishing the good from the evil, God hath also permitted these things that even the Misbelievers may receive a lesson and a warning.

"With respect to the contempt and mockery wherewith the Christian King hath loaded the Moslemah, because of the defeat that they have suffered and the evils they endure, let him know that we, the Moslemah so reproached, understand these things to have been caused by our sins, and by the misunderstandings and discords which have arisen among

ourselves, destroying the unity that should exist in our nation. Yes, of a truth, if we do but become one, and associate ourselves into a firm band, then shall we make you, Oh King Alfonso—you and your Christians—again confess that we still know how to prepare those dainty morsels which our forefathers of other times have made your ancestors taste to their sorrow. Know, therefore, that we have not lost hope in God, and that with His help we shall not desist from believing that there is prepared for thee, Alfonso, the most bitter cup that ever thou hast yet known, or even heard of, but which we shall make thee drink, yea, down to the dregs thereof.

"Meanwhile, and awaiting that day, do thou remember the times of Muhamad Almanzor, and bring to thy memory those treaties wherein thy forefathers offered him the homage even of their own daughters, and sent him those damsels in tribute, even to the land of our rule. As to ourselves, if it be true that our numbers have diminished, and that there is none to aid us, yet between thee and us there flows no sea, nor is there any other impediment to separate us one from the other; nay, rather we have still battle-grounds for our conflict, as thou shalt know, when the edges of our swords, reflecting the breasts of thy people, shall dazzle thine eyes with their pure and resplendent lustre, so that thou shalt be able to see only the fearful glancing of our arms.

"My confidence is in God: in Him, and in His angels appearing under human forms, do I hope to find protection from thy power. We expect help from God only; nor is there any other shelter open to us save of God alone, in whom is our sole refuge: at a word, we are looking only for one of two felicities; either a glorious victory over thy people—and Oh, the rapturous delight of that felicity—or a death that shall be still more welcome and glorious in the path and service of our God. And this! Oh, what a happiness, what a heaven of delights doth it not offer to us! for in that Paradise shall God confer on us the great reward and indemnification for all thy menaces and the result of our honourable death. But it will not be thus, and before that time shall come we shall yet receive a victory from the hands of God that shall redeem and deliver us from all our past sufferings: and may God the Highest give to thee, Oh

King Alfonso, the same miseries with which thou hast threatened us!

But with all this appearance of trust and fearlessness, King Omar Ben Alaftas, although a brave and noble captain, felt assured that his forces were not of strength to resist the power of Alfonso, and reflecting that the near neighbourhood of his lands to those of the Christian king would give the latter an opportunity for entering them, as he had just done those of Toledo, he wrote a pressing letter to King Juzef Aben Taxfin, begging that monarch not to delay his arrival in Spain, where his aid was much required to repress the advances of the Christians, who were contending against the Moslemah with continued prosperity: the letter to Jusef was written by his own hand, and was as follows:—

"From Ben Alaftas, the Confident in God, to Juzef Ben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah:—

"As the light and splendour of the good guiding star, so be that, O King of the Moslemah, whom may God defend and prosper! which leads, directs, and moves thy steps. Thou who hast chosen for thy path the way of beneficence and wisdom, hast occupied thyself continually for the good of others, and hast turned all thy desires to the making of war on the misbelievers.

"Of all this we have been constantly well informed, and being assured that thou hast dedicated thyself to the honour, exaltation, and defence of our Law, we think it well to have recourse to thee, who art the most powerful conqueror of the infidels, and the most illustrious captain, as well as the greatest emperor of our faith. We therefore implore thy assistance and the aid of thy troops to succour and defend our religion and ourselves.

"And the pressure of our misfortunes is indeed extreme; tribulations and calamities surround us on every part of Spain, while there are evils so much greater still menacing the land, that we cannot even think of them without terror. This accursed race of infidels is surrounding us on every side, and hath continued to do so from the time when our people began to neglect the subjugation of their hordes, and above all, since we have ceased to live in amity and union among ourselves. These our enemies have thus

become great and formidable; they have extended their wings, and having ever hated us, these dogs, now finding their power increased, have given way to their inimical fury, and taking us at a defenceless moment, have infused into us a panic which keepeth us with the head ever turned on the shoulder,* leaving us not power of helping ourselves, if it be not with perfidious treaties which bring no relief, and with plausible words of pretended submission, which give no comfort to our hearts, but rather keep us in perpetual care and the dread of what may next chance to us.

"Nor do the fears we suffer decrease because we daily send these infidels rich and precious gifts, permitting them, moreover, to drain every kind of provisions and muniments from our lands. All these sacrifices do not calm our terrors, nor diminish our perils; yet if the injuries we suffer did not go beyond this, we might endure them cheerfully, content to bear the trials and miseries of our condition; but they are increasing as well as persistent, for these our enemies are insatiable, they daily take from us our possessions, and we, wretched creatures that we are, permit them to do so in silence, nay, we are even compelled to be thankful when they inflict on us no more serious evil than robbery, and have to force ourselves to a sort of gratitude, bethinking ourselves at the same time of what we can find to give them when they next come to make a demand.

"But, my lord, they draw the very eyes from our head, and the wrongs they have inflicted on us have infected our whole being, so that they would almost appear to have become incurable. For our enemies now know that we possess nothing more to give them, and as their covetousness acknowledges no bounds, they are preparing to seize and plunder our cities and fortresses. At a word, the Christians have carried sword and fire over all Spain; the points of their lances and the keen edge of their swords have drunk and are drinking streams of Moslemah blood, while those who have escaped with life from the sanguinary battle, groan in a hard captivity, amidst the tortures inflicted

* In a state of watchfulness and fear, as one ever looking round him for a refuge.

by the cruel hands of their tyrants; since these infidels think only of bringing us to a miserable end, after having made us suffer indescribable torments.

"It would now appear that they are at this moment preparing to give us the ultimate assault, and believe that the fulfilment of their desires, which is our absolute ruin and subjugation, is no longer distant. But, O faith of God! can it indeed be possible that the Moslemah have lost the hope and courage which have hitherto enabled them to defend and uphold the truth of our law? Must the day come when infidelity shall triumph over the true faith? when the worshippers of a Godhead made up of different persons shall conquer those who confess only the Unity of God? and shall there be none found to defend us from these oppressors? Will there be no Redeemer to lift our sacred law once more from the earth to which it has fallen? and shall the Defender of religion and holy precepts so much needed, fail to appear? We, have, indeed, no other auxiliary or refuge but in God, before whose exalted throne, whereunto the breath of our lowliest earthly prayer is nevertheless permitted to rise, the Divine goodness hath prepared a refuge even for the vilest and most debased. For our misfortunes there is no earthly consolation; our calamities are unequalled.

"I have not written earlier to thee, O King of the Moslemah, because I have been employed in the attempt to shield the land from the incursions to which it hath been subjected, and by the siege of Medina Cauria, which may God once more restore to our governance! but that siege hath all but caused the utter depopulation of this Moslemah territory, being as it is so close on the borders of the foe. My fear lest the city of which I now write to thee should be irretrievably lost to us had been perpetually increasing, because the forces maintained around it by the enemy were augmented daily, until at length the place fell into his power; an event which has greatly added to our misfortunes. In the midst of Medina Cauria there is a castle of extraordinary strength, and which does indeed surpass every other in the power of its defences; it is as it were the centre of the centre, and dominates all the parts of the city which surround it, as would the true centre of a circle; holding

the entire circumference of the district in its ken, and permitting nothing done within a certain limit to be concealed from him who holds that fortress, and who commandeth all, whether near or on the outer extremities of that limit. Insomuch that this citadel was as a fierce and tempestuous wind in the violence with which it poured its defenders on those by whom it was beleaguered, but by a treacherous feint the enemy made himself master of the same, now the towers thereof are in the hands of the proud Infidel, and unless thou, O King, shalt come speedily with thy forces of foot and horse to the aid of the oppressed Moslemah, so shall the whole district be soon given a prey to desolation and ruin. I do not recal to thy memory, O King of the Moslemah, the words of the book of God nor the precepts of our honoured prophet, because among the wise Almas of your land there is more learning as well as more love of letters than we have in our land of Spain.

"This my letter do I send to thee by the hands of a noble Xeque, our chancellor and Alchatib, to the end that if any uncertainty should exist in thy mind as to particular portions of its contents, he might declare and make manifest the truth. He hath accepted the mission for his part, resolving to be the bearer of the letter and the messenger in this embassy, because to do so is a meritorious work, and in the hope of gaining from your power the singular grace of that succour which we need so much. Nor have I hesitated to confide to him all my intentions, having the most perfect trust in his well-assured fidelity, as well as in his knowledge and the clearness with which he will be able to make all known to thee. And herewith do we bid thee heartily farewell."

Now at this time King Alfonso of Gallicia was much inflated by the conquest of Toledo, which was as it were the head of Spain, and the chief abode of her ancient kings. He soon became desirous of new victories, and therefore trampled under foot the conventions existing between himself and Aben Abed, King of Seville; nay, was now content with nothing less than the making him a tributary and vassal, as he had done in the case of the unfortunate Yahye Alcadir Ben Almamun, King of Valencia. Wherefore the Christian King put an end to the peace which then

subsisted between himself and he King of Seville, and which prevented him from falling upon the territory of Andalusia, as he had done on that of Toledo and its Comarcas; writing to Aben Abed and requiring him to resign certain fortresses, which Alfonso enumerated, into the hands of his ambassadors. Alfonso furthermore despatched a considerable force for the purpose of receiving the strongholds in question; or supposing that to be refused, Aben Abed was exhorted at least to admit that the holds in question did of right belong to him, Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, King of Gallicia, who required the Sevillian monarch to do this without fail or delay, making manifest in all his words how highly he felt exalted and rejoiced by his lately obtained victories.

The letter of the Christian was conceived in the following terms:—

"From the commander and lord of the two laws and nations, the excellent and powerful King, Don Alfonso Ben Sancho, to the King Almutamed Billah Aben Abed. May God strengthen and enlighten his understanding to the end that he may determine to follow the true path, which is that of safety for him and his people! Salvation and good-will on the part of a King, even the extender of kingdoms and the protector of the nations, whose head hath become grey in the prudent observation and knowledge of things, in the exercise and mastery of arms, and in the perpetual acquisition of victories; in whose house the completion of his designs and the fulfilment of his will is never-failing; under whose banners Victory hath made her abode; who makes the lance and the sword to yield before him, even before his hand, and before the brave countenances of his cavaliers; from whom it comes that the dames and damsels of the Moslemah are clothed in the habits of mourning; He who commands the swords to be bound to the girdles of his warriors that the wail of lamentation and the cry of terror may be heard in your land: Oh, ye who arouse his anger!

"Well dost thou know what hath chanced in the city of Toledo, the head and court of all Spain; nor hath what is befalling its inhabitants and those of its Comarcas been concealed from thine ears. The siege of that city and its conquest have been made known to thee, and if thou and

thine hath hitherto escaped, your time is now come. Nor hath it been so long delayed by any cause but by mine own will and for mine own pleasure; wherefore, if thou art now quiet and undisturbed, do thou bethink thee that the prudence and circumspection of man is best made manifest by the manner in which he looks to himself at critical moments, considering well what it behoves him to do, lest he fall into a snare and suffer calamities for which he can afterwards find no remedy. And now of a truth, if thou dost not fulfil exactly all the conditions that exist between us, and redeem on thy part the word which we have given to each other—for to my heart there is nothing that lies nearer than the redemption of my word, and the preservation of my plighted faith—I will fall on thy territories, and with fire and sword will drive thee from the borders of Spain, without permitting any delays for question and reply, nor shall there be any other messenger between us but the loud clangour of arms, the fierce neighing of the war-horse, the thundering of the Atambours,* and the trumpets that sound to battle. I send thee this notice beforehand, to deprive thee of all excuse for delay, and I warn thee that he only hath need to be in haste whose fears assure him that the event will not be in accordance with his wishes.

"This message I have sent to thee by the hands of the Carmut Albarhan, because I confide in him, because I think him able to conduct and conclude affairs, and believe that he knows how to confer with such persons as command his respect. Treat him with confidence, for he hath prudence for all that thou mayst desire to communicate to him as to whatever may concern thy person and vassals. And now as shall be thy deportment in this matter, so shall hereafter be the works that shall ensue and their effects. Farewell."

CHAP. XIII.—Of the reply of Aben Abed to the King Don Alfonso, and of the conversation of the King of Seville with his son.

The letter of the King Don Alfonso appeared highly offensive and haughty to Aben Abed, King of Seville, as

* Atambours: drums used by the Moslemah.

did the proposals made to him on the part of the Gallician sovereign by his messenger Albarhan; and although there were many viziers in the Court of Aben Abed, who advised him to take the safer path, and come to an agreement with Alfonso, even to the paying him tribute, yet Aben Abed, who was a man of an absolute will, was not to be moved by those counsels; he considered the letter of Alfonso as a singular proof of arrogance and rude incivility: he therefore replied to him in verse, for Aben Abed was an excellent poet and very learned, as he did also in prose, and the substance of the latter mission was as follows:—

"From the great and victorious King—sheltered beneath the mercy of God and confiding in his divine goodness—Muhamad Aben Abed, to the proud enemy of Allah, Alfonso, son of Sancho, who entitles himself king of kings and lord of the two nations and laws. May God destroy his vain titles, and grant salvation to those who walk in the right way!

"And now as to thy pretension in calling thyself lord of the two nations, it is a truth that the Moslemah hath a better right to boast of that title than thyself, since they have possessed themselves of the territories of the Christians, and do still hold the same: as also because of the multitude of their vassals and their riches in arms and tributes, for never wilt thou be able to exalt thy power to an equality with ours, nor could all thy law, with each one of its followers, enable thee to attain to such. A fortunate year wouldst thou have cause to declare that in which thou shouldst behold an event so great accomplished. No more sound or prudent counsel could have been given thee than that which thou hast followed, for know that we are about to wake us from our sleep and arouse us from the supine carelessness in which we have lately permitted ourselves to remain. Up to the present time we might have had some thought of paying thee tribute, but not content with that, thou art now desiring to occupy our cities and fortresses. But dost thou not shame thee to have expressed such a wish? Wouldst thou have us resign our towns to thy people, and dost thou command us as if we were thy vassals? I marvel much at the heat and eagerness with which thou hast pressed us to fulfil thy vain and haughty will. Thou hast inflated thy

thoughts by the conquest of Toledo, without reflecting that thou dost not owe that advantage to thy power and the might of thy hand, but to the force and determination of the Divine will, which had in its eternal decrees so destined that it should be, and herein hast thou betrayed thyself into a fatal deception. Well too dost thou know that we also have arms and horses, with a brave people, who do not tremble at the clamours of battle, nor turn their eyes from the horrible face of death. Once engaged in the strife, thou knowest that they are well able to come forth with honour from the work. Our generals are not unacquainted with the ordering of squadrons, the due marshalling of their troops, and the management of the ambush. Nor do they fear to enter amidst the files of thy swords, and they turn not in terror from opposing lances. We ourselves have not shunned to make our couch on the hard earth, with a cloak for our resting-place, nor do we shrink from the watches of the night, or the duty of him who wakes to guard the camp. To us the furious blows of the raging brood of devils brings eternal life.

"And now, that thou mayst see my reply to be meant as it is said, I bid thee know that we hold a well-prepared response to thy demand in the shining swords and sharp lances that with one accord we have taken into our hands. True it is that there is no evil which doth not bring a benefit in its company, and that he who hath determined suddenly incurs as sudden a repentance. When did thy forefathers come happily from the strife with ours, if it were not by some vile baseness, some despicable craft of art, with so many of which thou art provided, but which yet are but of little value when too frequently repeated?

"I perceive that those who counsel thee are but beasts without understanding. Nay, thine is a people of so little worth that they are never found to uphold their vain prating by such works as might accredit the sounding phrase, and accordingly never can we slay them fighting in open field, but must ever drag them forth from within their towers, or combat their craven hordes as they lie hidden within the fastness of a rock or the walls of a city.

"Do these thy counsellors believe us to be deprived of understanding, or consider us unable to comprehend the

vicissitudes to which Men, States, and Kingdoms are subjected? It is true that we have made certain agreements to the effect that neither of us shall use his arms against the other, for which cause I have refrained from aiding the men of Toledo, whether with my forces or counsels, and may God forgive me for that fault, as well as for the fact that I have not earlier opposed myself to thy designs and aggressions. Or rather let me give thanks to God who hath comprised the whole punishment of mine error in the vain words wherewith thou hast insulted us. But as these words do not cut short the thread of life, so do I yet confide in Allah, that he will protect me against thee, nor shall any long time elapse before thou shalt see my warriors in thy land, for God favours and upholds the true faith; he extends salvation to those who know and follow the truth, but turns his face from falsehood and its deceits."

In verse the King of Seville expressed himself as follows:

1. Vile terrors and the debasement of fear find no harbour in the soul of the generous. A manly heart may not endure words like thine, however close the ties of friendship have once entwined around us. 2. Why should I fall in terror before the menaces of thy pride, as shakes the cowardly serf before the rage of his lord? Base and degrading is fear; it suits none save the low souls of the vulgar. 3. If in a dark hour of my destiny I once offered thee pledges of faith, hope thou from my hand nought henceforward but the combat and ruthless assault. 4. Battle by night and by day, desolation that never shall cease. Fire and the sword are thy portion. 5. Yea, such are the gifts that I proffer thee, these are the tributes I pay. Silver and gold are no gauds for thy hand; we approach with the steel of our swords. 6. Greater and mightier far is the God who created the world: Allah, the master of all. Allah, the God of my trust. Greater, I say, than the Cross of thy worship, the symbol that waves on thy banner and gleams on thy blade. 7. Up then, and rush to the battle. Arm thee, I call to the fight! Never again from this day be between us aught milder than slaughter and strife. Alas for the terror of Spain! 8. The sun wades eclipsed in black clouds, tears of blood are bedewing his face; but the hard steel shall light us with myriads of sparks, flashing forth with the groanings of pain.

9. See, the swords are bewildering thine eyes, the confusion of discord is round thee. 10. Nor repentance shall linger afar, when the lance of our warriors glows red in the blood of thy people cast low.

It is related that about this time King Alfonso despatched an ambassador to Seville, and in his company a Jew called Aben Galib, who was the treasurer of the Gallician King, and an important officer as well as a much-trusted servant: the business of this man at the court of Seville being to receive a certain number of doubloons, which Abed Abed, King of Seville, had engaged to pay to King Alfonso. Now the ambassador and the Jew had not taken up their abode in the city, but at a short distance without the gates, where they had erected their pavilions, and thither did Abu Zeidun, the treasurer of Aben Abed, in company with other Viziers, bear the doubloons in question.

But King Alfonso's Jew would not receive those coins, under the pretext that they were not of well-approved gold; he demanded that they should be subjected to the test of fire and the touch-stone. On this there arose discussions and rejoinders, which consumed much time, until at length the Jew proposed that Aben Abed should give him certain ships which he had on the coast, in the place of the doubloons, since that Israelite maintained his refusal to accept the coins without having first assayed them.

The proposal of the Hebrew enraged the King of Seville to so great a degree that he forbade his treasurers to pursue the matter further, and declared that the sum should not be paid in any manner: he added that he would no longer endure the insolence of the base crew whom Don Alfonso had sent to beard him; and that same night he dispatched certain of his slaves to the tents of the ambassador and the Jew, when they put the latter to death with many strokes of their daggers, sorely maltreating the Christians likewise, who had come in the train of the ambassador. Whether this last outrage was perpetrated by the slaves in their unbridled license, or was done by order of certain amongst the viziers, to gratify Aben Abed, is not known, but it is averred that the king showed no marks of regret or resentment when the Christian ambassador complained to him, on the following day, of the disorders which had been com-

mitted. The embassy of Alfonso thereupon departed from Seville, vowing vengeance and threatening reprisals on the part of his king.

Aben Abed was far from being insensible to the extent of the error and iniquity which he had thus committed, and some of his viziers even advised him to send an apology for that event to King Alfonso, attributing the violence suffered by the Jew to the rage of the people at the marks of distrust which he had shown. But Aben Abed, determined to break with Alfonso, thought only of preparing for the struggle about to ensue: wherefore, calling to him his son Raxid, who had received the oath of allegiance as his successor, and already took an important part in the government of the state, he addressed him in these words:—

"O my son, we are as orphans in Andalusia, standing between a stormy sea and a ruthless as well as a powerful enemy: we have no protector that can avail us ought, save God the Highest alone. From the Ameers of Andalusia thou seest well that we can hope but little, since they can do nothing either for our aid or defence; while on the other hand, the conquests and power of this Alfonso, the enemy of Allah, are also known to thee, and thou hast seen that by his good fortune and the constancy with which he has made war upon Toledo during seven years, he has made himself master of that city and its Comarcas, which he has peopled with infidels and the vilest of men. The enemy of God had long dissembled his intention of oppressing us, and making our land his prey, but now that he has raised his head I much doubt me lest his obstinacy and the good fortune of his arms should enable him to obtain the mastery of our kingdom; nay, I cannot but look to see him advancing at no distant period upon our own city, and if he once bring hither his famous troops, and seat his camp before our walls, it will be difficult to deliver ourselves from his power.

"And now the best resource that I can perceive in this extremity is that we entreat the succour of that new conqueror of Africa, Juzef Aben Taxfin, although we cannot do this without peril, as hath already been declared: and of a truth this Moslemah causes me scarcely less fear and distrust than doth the arrogance of the accursed Alfonso. By our continual wars, the treasures we might have once

commanded are exhausted, while the revenues and imposts have been much diminished by the interruptions given to the culture of the earth, in consequence of the perpetual incursions and destruction of their fields to which the labourers of the realm have been subjected. Our armies also have lost much of their efficiency, and the warriors no longer appear in troops at our call, as they formerly did, while those whom we do obtain are faint-hearted idlers, full of terror and discouragement. But there is even yet worse, for it is not to be concealed that the people have ceased to give us their affection; nay, they have even learned to abhor us, and not they only, but the nobles also, in such sort that I see no other refuge for our safety than the doubtful one of a recourse to this Juzef Aben Taxfin, whom they call King of the Moslemah."

To these words the son of the king, even Raxid Obeidallah, made answer and said: "My father and my lord,—Thou hast then resolved to attract into Spain that ambitious Aben Taxfin, who hath come forth from the deserts of Alkibla* to subjugate all the tribes of Almagreb and Mauritania? But do not be deceived; this Juzef, with his barbarous people, will fall on us and our possessions, as they have done on those of the Ameers in Africa; they will scatter our armies, break up our confederary of the Spanish Ameers, and eventually drive us from our beloved country."

To this Aben Abed replied: "God forbid, my son, that I should bring on myself the reproach of having ruined our Andalusia, or that it should be said of Aben Abed, 'He hath made the land an abode of Infidels and the heritage of the Christian. Never can I consent that maledictions on my name should be published from the Alminbars of our mosques, and that my memory should become execrable to the Moslemah, as hath happened to other most unhappy kings. No, by Allah! No, my son! rather would I prefer to make myself the slave of this King of Morocco, and become the servant of his camels, or the shepherd of his flocks. Yea, this and worse, rather than be called a tributary Ameer and vassal to those dogs the Christians."

Hearing that declaration, the Prince Raxid Obeidallah

* Alkibla: the South.

made answer: "Do then that which God hath inspired thee to do;" and the King Aben Abed replied, "I confide to His Divine goodness, and will trust that what He shall lead me to do will be good and advantageous to us as well as for all the Moslemah."

CHAP. XIV.—Of the embassy despatched by Aben Abed to the king of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin.

Maintaining the resolution thus announced, Aben Abed prepared his embassy; he wrote a letter with his own hand, and caused others to be written by his Alchatib: that of the King was as follows:—

"This letter for the presence of the Prince of the Moslemah, the protector of the faith, the restorer of the true sect of the Caliph. To the Imaum of the Moslemah, and king of the faithful, Abu Jacub Juzef Ben Taxfin, the illustrious and exalted by the greatness of his nobles, the laudator of the Divine majesty and of the power of the Highest, the resigned to God and to Heaven, who doth not inflate his thoughts by his honour and greatness, but contenteth himself with the rewards which God hath conferred on him,—Muhamad Aben Abed sendeth greeting with salutation in the highest, and as is due to the high and sovereign person of the Moslemah king. The mercy of God also and his benediction be upon the Ameer of the faithful.

"This letter do I send thee; and its discourse, leaving all other things, directeth itself solely to thy gracious majesty, and speaketh to thee from Medina Seville, being written in the middle of the Moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 479.*

"It is certain, O King of the Moslemah, whom may God exalt and protect with his law, that we, the Arabs of Andalusia, have not preserved our illustrious tribes so distinctly apart in our abodes of Spain, but that they have become interfused the one with the other. Our families, thus mingled, have finally dispersed themselves throughout

* A.D. 1086.

the land of Spain, in such sort that little if any communication hath of late been held between them and our Cabilas dwelling in Africa. This want of union hath of late divided our interests, and from that division have resulted schism and discord, whereby the force of states is ever diminished: our natural enemies have thus been enabled to prevail against us. We are now therefore in such a condition that we have none to aid and protect us against him who is seeking to destroy us, and trample our country under his feet. Every day hath the rancour and malevolence of this our foe, even Alfonso, King of Gallicia, become more and more insuffererable. He hath entered our territories, as might a raging hound; hath occupied our fortresses, hath carried their Moslemah defenders captive, and now menaceth to subject us to his yoke in such sort that none shall be suffered to remain who dare oppose resistance to his will.

"Nor have the Ameers of Spain yet roused themselves to the defence of those oppressed by this man. They have looked negligently on the ruin of their kindred, friends, and neighbours, and have not lifted their banners for the defence of our law, although it is a truth that this might have been done, had all been united in love as they ought to have been, and had each man been willing to perform his duty.

"But they are not now what they once were, seeing that the luxury of their lives, the soft breathing of these airs of Andalusia, the delicate baths of odoriferous waters, the debilitating amusements, the delicate meats, and the fresh fountains with which they regale themselves, and which are their daily habit, have deprived our people of their pristine force, causing them to shrink from the labours and hardships that must ever be suffered by all who engage in war, insomuch that not even the most potent of interests, nor the cause which of all others is most righteous, can avail to arouse them from their apathy.

"Thus we have brought ourselves to a pass wherein we no longer dare to lift up our heads, and since you, my lord, are a descendant of our ancestor Homair, a powerful Ruler of his people, and of wide extended regions, we betake ourselves to your protection with a perfect confidence, entreating aid from God our Creator, and from yourself, imploring you to come without loss of time into Spain and

do battle against our enemy, the infidel and faithless, who hath exalted himself against us, determined to destroy our Faith, and seeking the dishonour of our Law. Come then without delay, O King, and awaken in Andalusia that zeal for the true path wherein God hath commanded us to walk, which hath but too manifestly cooled, defending the law and the doctrines of our honoured prophet, for which deeds thou will merit that eternal reward and those Divine recompenses which thou canst not fail to receive in liberal measure from the hand of God, the exalted and powerful, whoso salvation, Divine mercy, and supremo benediction, be with thine exalted greatness."

Such was the letter of the king; that written in his name by his Alchatib Abu Bekir Ben Gedi was in the words which follow:—

"To the great and powerful sovereign, by God's favour King of the Moslemah and defender of the law: the Prince of the Almoravides, Abu Jacub Juzef Aben Taxfin, with whose light and splendour Allah hath illuminated all the regions of the earth, and by whose perfection God hath beautified and adorned all his creatures, rejoicing us also, who follow the same Law with the excellent king, rewarded by the favour of God and distinguished by his Divine mercy:

"We, Mohamud Aben Abed, the confident in God and supported by his power: salvation to the presence and sovereignty of him who is established in the faith, and whose faith and constancy are manifest to all the world.

"God hath fortified his law by the sanctions of unity and concord, and hath forbidden us to accept the errors and false laws which are contrary to our own, together with the promulgation of which he hath favoured his servants with a new rule of government, which inculcates austerity and gravity of life; of your constancy in which, O King, as well as of your illustrious descent, your sublime valour, and the zeal which hath made you the admiration of the world, there have come to us continued and ample accounts. We also know that God hath filled you with his mercy, which, as a beneficent dew, resuscitates and restores the zeal of man for the path of God, establishes him within the limits of justice, and gives him the true measure of equity, after which uprightness and rectitude are judged and rewarded.

"But to our people on the contrary there hath happened a calamity which is such as to cause all that hath preceded it, however lamentable and grievous, to be lightly considered and forgotten, and to make every man stand as in confusion and amazement at the enormity of this new evil that hath now befallen us. The cause of our misfortune is the covetousness and ambition of a cruel enemy, who is constantly making on us a war of fire and blood, his heart being so completely filled with an uncontrolable hatred to our law and to all who follow its precepts, that we can see no hope of change, and know of no remedy by which the fury of the same can be attempered. The power and pride of this foe increase with each new day, while we sink lower and become less able to resist, in the like proportion. The Christian adversary augments his force and assembles his confederates for our ruin, but we unhappily agree in nothing, save in slumbering altogether, and in looking on with indifference while our enemy exalts himself by the destruction of our brethren in the faith: neither have we once gathered together to attack him in our turn, or to make an effort for the common defence. We sleep in a profound lethargy; the perpetual injuries of our inimical fortune do not avail to awaken us, nor do the grave calamities which are the inevitable results of this unhappy state of things suffice to arouse us from our slumbers.

"Even now hath this our Christian enemy sent us a letter filled with lightnings and thunders, mingled with traitorous promises and deceptive words, whereby he would fain persuade us to yield to him our fortresses and cities, not excepting the mosques of our worship, which he would have us abandon to him that he might fill them with his friars, and exalting his adored crosses on their lofty towers, might cause the mass and the requiem to be there sung, where now the sacred Azala* is daily heard. At a word, he would take from us the land of our abode, which he would then people with his Christians.

* The Azala.—The daily prayers in the mosques are so called collectively; of these there are five—that of Azohbi, or the dawn; Adohar, or mid-day; Alasar or Alazar, afternoon; Almagreb or Almagrib, the sunset; and Alatema, or nightfall.—*Trans.*

"But God hath established by thee, O King of the Moslemah, a possession and dominion whose greatness and elevation he hath blessed and shall protect. He hath made thee his minister and envoy, to the end that thou, by the virtuous force of thine arms, mightest contribute to the maintenance of the towers of his law, and that on this occasion thou mayst participate in the splendour of his divine light.

"Well art thou provided with those whom thou mayst call to accompany thee. Armies eager to purchase paradise at the cost of their blood and life are not wanting to thee, and thou art rich in the possession of men who aspire to behold their weapons glancing in the sacred war.

"If desire for earthly wealth can move thee, here are not wanting the rich textures, the jewels, the gold, the silver, and the precious ornaments which form the most costly stores of there. We have fountains, moreover, pouring their fresh waters, which have the clear purity of crystal, amidst the shady groves of delicious gardens, whose amenity is as that of paradise; but if, as we believe, O King, thy heart be moved only by that which appertains to the service of God, and conduces to the gain of eternal life, then thou hast here presented to thee an occasion the most opportune to thy desires, since in these regions the sanguinary battle can never fail thee, nor shall there be wanting the sharp skirmish wherein may gleam perpetually the pointed lances and the brightly glittering swords, rendered bare by the powerful arms and wielded in the strong hands of thy warriors. This sacred paradise and this holy grove hath God planted here, that ye may be translated from the shadows of the waving banner and the glancing panoply, to the bowers of that blissful abode where he hath reserved for you the bright recompense of your merits.

"We seek our refuge in thy power, and make our shields of thy strong arm, with that of God and his angels, who shall fight with thee against these infidels by whom we are threatened with perpetual war. Be moved, then, O Ameer of the faithful, and let thyself be guided by that divine word, which saith, 'Slay them, for God shall give them torment and a pain of bitterness by your hands. He hath poured his malediction upon them, and will give you the

victory over their hordes, with salvation, which he shall distribute with a liberal hand, to the noble breasts of the faithful.'

"In conclusion, may God unite us as one, and draw us together by the word of unity, to the end that we may help ourselves, through the mercy of Allah, and the benefits which he hath conferred on us in his law, that we may give him praises for the same, by calling on his holy name, as well as by the propagation of his decrees, and the knowledge of his goodness.

"The salvation of God, with his mercy and benediction, be with the King of the Moslemah, the defender of the law of God and the protector of the faith."

The noble ambassadors of Aben Abed, King of Seville, delivered these letters to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin, making him a relation moreover of the miserable condition of things in Spain, and describing the haughty insolence of the King Don Alfonso, as well as the numerous advantages obtained by that sovereign. Wherefore, having read the letters of Aben Abed, and heard the relations of his ambassadors, Juzef Aben Taxfin showed them to the Xeques of his Court, who were there in presence, as were certain of his kinsmen, to whom he said, "What is your opinion as to these requests, and in regard to the expectations of the Andalusians?"

To these words the men of his kindred, who had arrived from the Desert but a short time previously, and to whom the name of Christian was then for the first time made known, replied, "Oh Ameer of the Moslemah, it appears to us a just and proper thing that every Mosleman should succour his brethren of the Moslemah who believe in God and in his Prophet, and a shameful relation it would be for us were it recorded against us that we had a neighbour and brother of our own law so near to us that between us and him there is nothing but a streamlet or narrow line of water, and that we had nevertheless permitted him to remain alone without help, while his enemy devoured him at a single mouthful. But despite our opinions, do thou, Oh Ameer, decide as shall seem to thee most advisable, since the power and sovereign command belong to God and to thyself alone."

King Juzef then took counsel apart and in secret with

his Alchatib, or secretary, Abderahman Aben Esbat, an Andalusian and native of Almeria, requiring that sage to give him his opinion in the matter; and the secretary made answer, "The command over us is for God and yourself, my lord, O King, and it is not for us to give you counsel, except as your humble and obedient subjects." To which the king rejoined, "Let me hear nevertheless what is thy thought of this matter, and how it would be best for us to act." Whereupon the Catib replied, "It is without doubt good and reasonable that every Mosleman should be ready to aid his brethren the Moslemah, yet there are certain reasons which present themselves to me as opposing your interference in the affairs of Spain at this time."

"By my life!" said the king, "tell me what these reasons are."

Then the secretary made answer and said, "O King of the Moslemah, may God increase thy strength: thou must know that the land of Spain is as an island cut off from the remainder of the firm land, and surrounded by the sea, except only towards the East, where there are mountains which form a high barrier, dividing the country from its neighbours. Of this land of Spain, thus formed, the Moslemah have long occupied a large portion, but which is now daily diminishing in their hands, while the Christians who inhabit the rest are proportionately extending their borders. Now the land is a narrow one, cut up and encumbered by many hills,—a kind of prison for those who approach the same; and he who enters therein but rarely cometh forth therefrom, but findeth himself for the most part compelled to remain beneath the lordship of the rulers who command the country. If therefore thou shouldst at once place thy foot on that soil, the power of returning would not be afterwards in thy hand. And what friendship is there, moreover, between thyself and this Ameer, who thus calls thee to his aid? What security doth he offer thee, and what ancient ties of kindred compel thee to afford him succour? I should even be in fear, lest, if God be pleased to favour the designs and undertakings of his enemy, this King of Seville should then find means to prevent thy retreating in safety, nay, should even cut off thy passage and the road for thy return into Africa, which it would be easy for him to do.

"Considering all this, I would have thee write to the King of Seville, if it appears to thee good, to the effect that thou canst not now pass over into his land, and that he must excuse thee from doing so until he hath first surrendered to thee the Green Island,* to the end that thou mayst therein assemble troops in whom thou canst confide, and who shall assure thee of the passage for returning at all times: so that thou mayst depart from that point when and whither it shall please thee."

"Of a truth, Abderahman," returned the king, "thou hast herein reminded me of a circumstance which I had not taken into consideration, and thou hast spoken well. Go, therefore, and write as thou hast said, for in this thing I will conform myself to thy counsel, which pleaseth me well." Abderahman wrote a letter accordingly, in the name of Juzef Ben Taxfin, and in that letter he spoke thus:

"In the name of God the merciful, the pitying. From the King of the Moslemah, the Defender of the faith, to the generous king, confident in God and supported of Allah, Abulcasem Muhamad Aben Abed, whom may God perpetually uphold, conduct, and fortify, according to the majesty of His holy will. The salvation of God, with His mercy and benediction.

"This premised, we give you to wit that your letter and noble request have reached our hands, and we have made ourselves well acquainted with the contents thereof, wherein you call upon us to aid and succour you in delivering your land from the calamities and evils by which you are oppressed. We have likewise understood by your missives how little union and brotherhood have been preserved among you, the kings of Andalusia, and the lack of favour that ye show each other. I, therefore, for my part am willing to become your right hand, and to aid you in my person and with my people, which is no more than in reason I ought to do, according to what God hath commanded us in his honoured Koran.

"But it is not possible that I should pass into Andalusia,

* The Green Island or rather group of small islands so called, lay almost immediately close to the Spanish coast near Algeziras: they are now called the Palombas.

unless you first agree to give the Green Island to my keeping, and to the hands of such as I may place with confidence therein, to the end that we may be secured of free and unimpeded passage when and as it shall be our pleasure to use it. If this appear to you of good counsel and a reasonable demand, I on my part will comply with your request, and will pass over without delay to give you assistance, if so it shall please God. Salutation in the highest."

When the ambassadors of Aben Abed returned to Seville, and had made known the demand of Juzef Ben Taxfin, there were differences of opinion in the council on that subject, and the Prince Obeidallah Arraxid said to his father, "What does it appear to you, my lord, that this man will have? To me the demand of the King of Africa appears a great and unreasonable presumption; wherefore my dread of this measure and distrust of the proposed alliance have increased."

To this the King Aben Abed replied, "That which the King of the Moslemah hath demanded is not much, my son, when compared with the importance of the benefits which his presence will confer, and which we shall receive at his hands if he come to the aid of our people and the defence of our law."

Having heard these words, Prince Obeidallah called his Cadies together, and caused the cession of the Green Island to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, and to his descendants, to be made out with all due form, without reserving in it, or in any part of it, any right whatever to the King Aben Abed, or to any creature of Allah on his behalf. This writing being duly authenticated by sign and seal, was sent immediately to the King of the Moslemah, with a very earnest entreaty that his coming might be effected without any delay.

Now the governor of Algezira at this time was a son of Almutamed Aben Abed, King of Seville, called Yezid Radillah, as we have said before: to him, then, his father now sent orders, commanding him to give up that fortress to the Moors of Africa, who should be sent by the King, even Juzef Ben Taxfin, and that those forces having arrived, he should himself immediately depart with all his people from the

city and its territory. All which was accomplished accordingly in every particular.

CHAP. XV.—KING JUZEF ABEN TAXFIN LANDS IN SPAIN, AND THE AMEERS UNITE AGAINST THE CHRISTIAN SOVEREIGN, DON ALFONSO.

WHEN King Juzef found that the donation of the Island was not withheld, he prepared to pass into Spain: wherefore, having assembled his Alcaides and troops, whom he convoked and bade to assemble in Morocco, he announced to all that it was his purpose to go forth against the Christians; and a few days later, having gathered a large force, he took his way to Cebta.

Then the King of Seville, Almutamed Aben Abed, ever desirous of promoting his own ambitious views, and being anxious to impress the King of the Moslemah with a good opinion of himself, to the end that Juzef might be prevailed on to act more especially in his own favour, resolved to go forth to meet the African sovereign; and this he did the rather as his affairs had reached a perilous crisis, seeing that messengers had been sent him from Saragossa declaring the place to be cruelly pressed by the King Alfonso, and almost on the point of surrender. Hearing, therefore, that Juzef had left Morocco for Cebta, he believed the time to be opportune for his purpose; wherefore, embarking with a brilliant company of noble Andalusians, he crossed the narrow sea, and went to visit the King of the Moslemah, whom he met in the Land of Tangier, at a place known as Velila, which is but three days' journey from Cebta.

Juzef received the King of Seville very amicably, and Aben Abed discoursed to him largely of the condition of Andalusia, declaring that the Moslemah of that country now placed all their hopes of liberty and security in his person alone; he therefore begged that Juzef would make what speed he might to release them from their perpetual fears, and from the heavy anxieties wherewith they were oppressed. The King of Seville dwelt much on the insolent pride of Alfonso the Christian: he described the victories

which that monarch had obtained, with the incursions whereby he had devastated the land, and the sieges he had caused the cities to sustain, concluding by the declaration that the Infidel was even then blockading the city of Saragossa, which he was on the point of reducing to his obedience.

Aben Abed furthermore spoke with the King of the Moslemah in regard to the different Ameers of Spain, describing the qualities of each, and remarking on the evils which all had suffered from their discords and contentions; these, as he well observed, having been the sole cause of their decadence and the ruin of the state.

To all this Juzef Ben Taxfin replied, "Return instantly to thy land, and look well to these affairs. I also will rejoin you there, if God so will it, without delay; I am ready to be your leader and your general: doubt not that we shall conquer. Go, and I will follow."

Aben Abed returned to Spain accordingly, and Juzef proceeded to Cebta, where he made all arrangements for his passage: he prepared ships, assembled his banners, gathered his people, and having carefully disposed all things for the due government of the provinces of Velad Zahara, of Alkibla, of Zaba, and of Almagreb, from the tribes and Cabilas of all which he drew large bodies of men, he then commanded that his well-prepared force should pass over into Spain; and the number of that host there embarked was so great, that none might hope to count their squadrons, save Him only who created them.

This innumerable multitude then sailed to the Green Island, and encamped on its plains; Juzef Ben Taxfin also disembarked on its shores, being accompanied by Ibrahim, and a considerable number of Almoravide generals belonging to the tribe of Lamtuna, in whom he placed much confidence, doing them great honour, and exhibiting for them a particular esteem and consideration.

Now it had come to pass that when the King of the Moslemah, even Juzef Aben Taxfin, had entered his ship and found himself on the waters, he extended his hands to Heaven, and uttered the words of supplication which follow:—"Allahuma! If this my passage across the sea be

destined to prove a good work for the Moslemah, which Thou alone canst know, then do Thou tranquillise and appease its waters; but if what I am about to do be not for their profit, then let Thy power cause the sea to become tempestuous and adverse, so that it shall not permit my passage." And immediately God appeased the waves; the moment those words had ceased, the sea became very serene and calm, so that the ship of Juzef passed over with extraordinary swiftness. This passage took place on a Thursday, during the interlune of Rebie Primera, in the year 479.

The King of the Moslemah disembarked very happily on the Green Island; and that same day he made there his prayer at the hour of the Adohar. The governor of Algezira, Aba Chalid Aradillah Yezid, youngest son of Aben Abed, King of Seville, came forth to meet him with a splendid company of cavaliers, as he had been commanded to do by his father, while at the gate of the city there awaited him the King Almutamed Aben Abed in person, accompanied by all the Ameers of Spain, and attended by a large number of the principal Alcaides and nobles. Nor was any time lost after the arrival of Juzef, since that same evening a council was held in relation to the affairs of the campaign on which the allies were about to enter.

During the time that Juzef Ben Taxfin remained encamped with his army around Algezira, the King of the Moslemah caused the walls of the city to be greatly strengthened, restoring them in all such parts as had become dilapidated, and reconstructing certain of the towers which had fallen to decay. He also commanded that a deep ditch should be dug around the city, supplying the fort with all munitions of war in great abundance, and with provisions for many days. Here Juzef placed a garrison selected with particular care, recommending a watchful guard to the officers entrusted therewith, and commanding the latter to remain constantly at their post.

This was the first passage made into Spain by the Ameer of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, who undertook four of them in the course of his after-life, as we shall relate in due time.

King Aben Abed now departed for Seville, there to com-

mand the preparation of the provisions required by the Almoravides who had come to his succour, and also to make ready the presents which he destined for the King and his principal leaders; Juzef himself following in the same direction when he had satisfied himself that all needful arrangements and precautions had been sufficiently cared for in Algezira; which done, he proceeded with his host to the city of Seville.

Some writers have declared that the King Aben Abed met King Juzef at the distance of a day's journey from Algezira; and these authorities say that on coming within sight of the King of the Moslemah, he made a show of intending to dismount from his horse to kiss his hands by way of courtesy; but that Juzef would not permit him to do so, and prevented it by approaching promptly to salute him. The two monarchs then entered into conversation, discoursing largely in relation to the war, and to such matters as they had in hand, entertaining each other with ingenious words during the entire way. The army was meanwhile provided with excellent quarters throughout the march, as well as with provisions in abundance. All these had been cared for by the King Aben Abed in person, and the divisions were now apportioned with due regard to the quality and nobility of each person, very much to the satisfaction of all. The King of Seville was meanwhile never weary of admiring the vast force of carefully-selected and well-appointed troops, which Juzef Ben Taxfin had brought with him, and then considered it certain that their campaign against the King Don Alfonso must needs prove a very prosperous one.

The news of the arrival of the Almoravide Moors soon reached the army of the Gallician King, who was then encamped before Saragossa, when he instantly raised the siege, intending to proceed at once to the encounter of the African sovereign. But first he called a council of his generals, and the result of the discussion then held was, that Alfonso wrote to Aben Radmir, also a King of the Christians—whom may Allah confound!—and to him whom they call Barhanis; the first being at that time occupied with the siege of Medina Tartuxa, while the second was carrying desolation into the territories of Valencia; but now both hurried with their

forces to the aid of King Alfonso, to whom they joined themselves without delay. Alfonso likewise sent messengers to summon the people of Gelalikia,* Castilla, and Bayona, from whose provinces he soon received an innumerable host; wherefore, as these hordes of Infidels congregated around their king Alfonso, and he held them in his hands, that misbeliever assembled his Captains, when all agreed that it was now time to sally forth against Aben Almutamed, and to the encounter of Juzef Ben Taxfin, King of the Almoravides.

The latter had meanwhile arrived with his army at Medina Sevilla, where the troops made a halt of eight days, not for rest only, but also to complete the necessary preparations for the coming battle. The Ameers of Andalusia likewise convoked their people, whom they commanded to join the host on the road to Badajoz, when the Moslemah came flocking from every province of Spain, the Ameer of Almeria alone excusing himself, he having near him a frontier line of the Christians, which kept him in perpetual cares and tumults.

The King of Algarve, Omar Ben Alaftas, despatched his brother Almostansir in advance of the army, with command to provide the needful munitions for man and horse along the whole line of march. When all the Ameers and generals had joined their troops, such of the people as were considered unfit for the battle were dismissed to their homes, and that done, the host departed from Seville.

The vanguard of the army was led by the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, in person, the second in command being his general Abu Zuleyman Davoud Ben Ayxa, who marched at the head of ten thousand Almoravide cavalry; then followed the Ameers of Spain, Almutamed Muhamad Aben Abed, King of Seville, Balkin Ben Habus, King of Granada, Aben Muslama, Lord of Almatgar of the Hills, the Lord of Valencia, Aben Dylnoun Yahye, the King of Algarve, Omar Ben Alaftas, with the Walies Ben Azun, Ben Gadun, and Ben Zaydun.

Now the King of the Moslemah had decided that all these Ameers and Lords of Andalusia should form one host of

* Gallicia.

their separate armies, that body to be led by Aben Abed of Seville, while the force of the Almoravides should form another host apart. In this manner it was, then, that they marched; the place which Aben Abed left in the morning being occupied in the evening by Juzef Aben Taxfin with his Almoravides, and so they continued to advance until they arrived at Medina Artuxa, where they made halt for three days.

It is related that, before leaving Toledo, the King of Gallicia, Don Alfonso, had dreams wherein he beheld a terrible vision, and this he saw not once only, but several times; and the manner of the appearance was on this wise: In his dream, the King believed himself to be mounted on an elephant, and beside him there was raised on high an Atambore,* which it seemed to him that he sounded with his own hands; but the clamours that pealed forth from the instrument were so prodigious and frightful, that the King instantly awoke in terror and amazement. And now, as this was not the dream of one night only, but of many, Alfonso could not help thinking it of moment, and although he well knew that dreams are for the most part but vain shadows proceeding from natural causes which variously excite the imagination, yet he also remembered that God hath frequently been pleased to suffer great events to be presented to the soul in those hours of repose and quietude, giving, as it were, a foreshadowing of such weighty and important events as are thereafter to ensue.

Thus when, after several nights of this perturbing dream, Alfonso once more found himself awakened by the same, in a state of much oppression and anxiety, he remained watching in considerable disquietude until the dawn, and when day had come he commanded that his most learned men should be summoned to his presence,—the sages of the Christians, with their monks, their bishops, priests, &c., accompanied by the rabbis of the Jews, who were his vassals: nay, these last were especially summoned, seeing that they are more profoundly skilled in divinations and the interpretation of dreams than are the men of any other creed.

* Atambore—the Eastern drum.

All these wise men having assembled in his presence, King Alfonso made them an exact relation of his dream, which he described with much prolixity, and in precise order as it had happened; when, having concluded his narration, he added these words: "That which most amazes and alarms me in this matter is the peculiarity of the elephant which I see in these my visions, and which is an animal not reared in our country, nor seen therein: in like manner the Atambore is not of the form and kind which we have in use among us, nor is that either to be seen in Spain; wherefore do ye consider what these may portend, and give me the signification thereof without delay.

The wise men thereupon retired, and having considered that vision and dream, they returned to the presence of Alfonso, to whom they said: "Lord King, this dream and the vision that thou hast seen are sent to signify that thou shalt vanquish these great armies that the Moslemah have congregated against thee; that thou shalt despoil their camp, and make thyself master of the riches they bring with them; that thou shalt occupy their territory, and return victorious with great honour and a glorious fame: they signify, furthermore, that thou shalt see this thy triumph made known through all parts of the East, since the elephant which thou dost nightly appear to bestride is this Juzef Aben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah and lord of the far-extending lands of Africa, who, as well as the elephant, hath had his birth and been reared in the deserts of that country, nor hath come forth from thence to any other end than that thou shouldst conquer him and mount upon his shoulders, in despite of the vast power which he wields. The strangely-formed Atambore which thou hast sounded on these many nights, implies the unheard and marvellous fame which shall echo throughout the world, and carry the knowledge of thine illustrious victories to every part of the same.

Alfonso had listened with extreme attention to that declaration; but when the wise men had ceased to speak, he said, "It appears to me that ye have gone far from the true interpretation of my dream, seeing that the explication which my heart gives me—and rarely doth it deceive me—is of a widely different kind, for this announces to me nothing better than events of terror and dismay."

Having thus spoken, the King turned his head, and looking towards certain Moslemah cavaliers who were his vassals, and stood in the chamber, he said to them, "Do ye perchance know of any Alime of your nation, who hath skill in the interpretation of dreams?" Thereupon those cavaliers replied that they did know of such, since there was in Toledo itself a wise man who taught in one of the mosques, and who would interpret the vision to the satisfaction of the King.

Alfonso then commanded that they should bring that sage to his presence, since he desired to see him and to speak with him respecting the matter in question. The Moslemah cavaliers went, therefore, to seek the man of whom they had spoken, and this was the Faki Muhamad Aben Iza, who was a native of Magama, and to whom they made known the summons and desire of the King.

Muhamad Aben Iza then asked them if they knew for what purpose he was summoned; and they repeated to him what they had heard of the matter, adding that the king desired to hear the interpretation of a dream from his mouth; but the Faki replied, "God will not permit me to cross the threshold of an Infidel for any such purpose;" and all their efforts to prevail on him to consent remained without avail. It was in vain that the nobles represented to him the honour he would receive for having entered the presence of so powerful a sovereign; the Faki did but repeat these words, "God is my Lord and my Protector; in His hands are the good and the evil that are to be my lot." Beyond that, the cavaliers could obtain nothing.

Much displeased, these messengers then returned to the king; but to avoid awakening the anger of Alfonso, which might have turned to the destruction of the sage, they said to him, "Lord King, this Faki is a man of austere life and great humility, insomuch that he doth not consider it lawful for him to enter palaces and the dwellings of the great; but, since this is a delicacy of his law and of his religious humility, it appears to us excusable; wherefore, if your Highness shall permit, we will relate to the wise man the dream you have had; we will then bring to you the explication which he shall make thereof, and which we hope will be the true one."

With that proposal the king declared himself content; he repeated his dream and the vision to the Moslemah cavaliers, and they returned to the Faki Muhamad Aben Iza of Magama. He was at that time reading in the mosque within Toledo, for he was the Almocri of the same, and they there related to him very minutely the vision of the king, desiring him to meditate maturely thereon, since it was a grave thing and of much importance; also they were anxious to satisfy the desire of the sovereign.

The Faki betook himself to his meditations accordingly, and when these were finished, he said, "Go to the King Don Alfonso, and say that the accomplishment of his vision is very near, and that the signification of the dream is after this wise:—He shall be vanquished, yea, in a disgraceful defeat and with great slaughter; he shall fly with but few of his people, and the victory shall remain with the Moslemah. Tell him, moreover, that this declaration is derived from the honourable Koran,—'Know ye not what your God hath prepared for him of the elephant? Hath he not brought his force to nothing, and rendered his evil intentions of no avail? See ye not that He hath sent over them the vultures of Babel?'

"These words," continued the Faki, "gave intimation of the defeat and downfall of Ibrahim, King of the Abassides, when he went forth with his powerful army against Arabia, and with intent to destroy Alharam, the House of God; to which end he went riding on a great elephant: but God sent for his destruction the wild vultures of Babel, who cast balls of glowing fire upon that host, and rendering vain the proud resolves of the Ethiopian king, even Ibrahim of the Abassides, converted his pride and pomp into wretchedness and the vileness of dust. As to the Atambore which Alfonso describeth as having hung beside him, and which he struck with his own hands, this signifies that the hour of his desolation is approaching, and that the day when he shall next hear the sounding of trumpets and the clangour of drums from the ranks of his foes, shall be a day of terror, defeat, and carnage for the bands of the Infidel."

This interpretation was repeated by the Cavaliers to the king, who changed colour as he heard it, and who said, "By the God of my worship! let this your Alfaki tremble

if he hath lied, for be sure that I will make him a warning." But when that fierce menace of the king was repeated to the Faki, he treated it with contempt, and said, "Neither Alfonso nor any other can work me woe without the permission of God: be it then according to His will."

CHAP. XVI.—Of the battle of Zalacca.

When the King Don Alfonso had assembled his host, it was found that there had congregated an innumerable multitude, and of that force more than eighty thousand were cavalry. The half of these horsemen were clothed in heavy armour, being covered with iron, and the other half were light cavalry, many of them Arabs, of whom Alfonso had nearly thirty thousand in his service. Thus there were many Moslemah in the camp of the Christian king.

With this host Alfonso marched to the encounter of Juzef Aben Taxfin and the Ameers of Andalusia; and when both armies had arrived within a short distance of each other, they formed their camps, which they seated in the territory of Badajoz, among the groves and plains called those of Zalacca, which are at the distance of some four leagues from that city. Aben Abed, King of Seville, advised that the Moslemah force should form two separate camps; this he did, to the end that their appearance might inspire the enemy with the greater fear and dismay:—and of a truth the spectacle which they thus presented was one well calculated to bear terror to the heart of him who beheld it. The river of Badajoz, which is called Nahar-Hagir, flowed between the Christian camp and that of the Moslemah, both armies drinking of its waters.

We find it related in certain of the authors writing at the time, that the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, here wrote a letter to the King Don Alfonso; others say that this letter was written at Medina Artuxa, and contained a proposition to the effect that the Gallician monarch should do one of three things, which were these,—first, that he should abandon the Christian faith and declare himself

a Mosleman; or, he should acknowledge himself the vassal of Juzef Aben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah; or, failing these, he should prepare himself for the battle. In the letter, Juzef is furthermore affirmed to have spoken as follows:—"I have heard, O King Alfonso, that thou hast expressed a wish for the possession of ships wherewith thou mayst come to seek me in my dominions, wherefore I have spared thee that trouble, as thou seest, and have come to seek thee in thy territories instead. God hath thus conjoined us in these regions, to the end that thou shouldst taste the fruits of thy presumption, and receive such fulfilment of thy desire as He hath destined for thee."

This letter being written and despatched, was given into the hands of Alfonso, and the messenger related on his return that the king, having read it very rapidly, had then cast it to the earth in great anger; which done, he turned to the envoy, and with infinite haughtiness uttered these words: "Go and bid thine Ameer not to conceal himself in the battle, which if he do not, we shall see each other."

There then arose many questions and replies between the hosts and among the generals, with respect to the order and day of the battle: and on that occasion the King Don Alfonso is said to have written a very crafty letter to Juzef Ben Taxfin, wherein he said that the next day being Friday, which was the holy day or solemn festival of the Moslemah, it would not be well to give battle on that day; and the next being Saturday, was the festival of the Jews, of whom he had many in his host, and did not consider it just to infringe on their sabbath; while the third was in like manner Sunday, or the day held sacred by the Christians, when it would by no means be suitable to give battle, for the same reason. He therefore wished that the conflict should be deferred to that following, namely Monday, when they might array themselves to the fight with one accord, standing forth power against power, without scruple on any part.

The King of the Moslemah, with consent of the Ameers of Andalusia, replied that he was content to await the time which King Alfonso had fixed, and that the battle should be given on Monday, which was the 14th of the moon Regeb, in the year 479. But the King of Seville warned Juzef

Aben Taxfin to keep careful watch, and be ready for the contest at every moment, seeing that they had to do with an adversary of infinite craft and well practised in all the wiles and stratagems of war.

The night preceding the 12th day of Regeb having come, Aben Abed repeated his advice and exhortations to all, warning every leader to hold himself ready for the strife: in the meantime he despatched scouts and spies on horseback, in whom he had confidence, towards the camp of Alfonso, that these might observe his movements and give instant notice of his approach.

In this matter the King of Seville busied himself till the approach of dawn, and being then engaged in the prayer of Asohbi (since the day was breaking, and the light about to appear), he remarked that one of the spies whom he had set to observe the enemy's movements came hurrying towards him in great haste. When the man approached within hearing, he exclaimed, "O Muley, now cometh the foe against the Moslemah with a host innumerable as the thickest swarms of the locust!" Whereupon the King of Seville despatched that intelligence to Juzef Ben Taxfin, whom the messenger found in his pavilion fully prepared.

It has been affirmed, that Aben Abed at the same time consulted one of his astrologers, who drew a figure, and having done so, said, "Muley, this will be a dark and fatal day for the Moslemah: let them not enter into the battle." But that prediction Aben Abed would not repeat to King Juzef and the other Ameers, lest it might intimidate them, or lest, thinking lightly of the matter, they might consider him weak and timid for giving ear to the predictions of the stars, as predicted by the astrologer in question.

King Juzef had not permitted any man to sleep in his camp that night, and now sent his General, Almudafar Davoud, in advance, with a large body of cross-bowmen and the vanguard of his Almoravide cavalry, those troops having been previously appointed by Juzef Ben Taxfin to commence the battle. Now Davoud Aben Ayxa was a general of high reputation; he had not his equal among the Moslemah for courage and resolution, and had ever displayed the utmost

address in the perilous conjunctures of battle, wherein he was largely experienced.

That enemy of Allah, the tyrant Alfonso, had marshalled his host into two divisions, and he now sent his advance against the Moslemah, expecting to take them unawares, wherefore the van of his army pressed forward very eagerly; but after a few skirmishes with the corps of Davoud Ben Ayxa, with no decided success on either side, they both withdrew, each having suffered considerable diminution of his numbers; the advance of each army then retired upon the main body of their respective hosts. But in the course of a few hours thereafter, the cry of battle was again heard to resound, the clamour of men being mingled with the clangour of the trumpets. The King of Seville then commanded his astrologer to make a new observation, when the learned man discovered that the configurations were become much more favourable to the Moslemah, and promised them a glorious victory. This intelligence the King of Seville instantly despatched to King Juzef, in the following verses, for Aben Abed was an excellent poet, as hath more than once been declared:—

> "God's anger on the Christian horde
> Sends cruel slaughter, by thy sword,
> While favouring stars announce to thee
> And to thy Moslems, Victory."

King Juzef, whom the dubious result of the skirmish above mentioned had much discouraged, became animated by those lines; he rode from rank to rank among his people, and was greatly rejoiced to perceive that all seemed eager for the fight. The King Don Alfonso also came forward on his part, and meeting the division led by Davoud Aben Ayxa, a sanguinary and murderous conflict ensued. The Moslemah maintained their ground with a strong heart, but the enemy of God bore them down and overwhelmed them by his heavy cavalry and vast numbers, as would a torrent that rushes raging from the mountains. Close and obstinate was that terrible encounter, wherein the warriors hacked and hewed each other to the earth with their swords, since the lances, already broken, could avail to their rage no longer.

The second division of the tyrant Alfonso, led on by Albar Hanis and Garcia Aben Radmir, now came forward, and its leaders brought their troops boldly into action: they fell with impetuous fury on the camp of Aben Abed and the other Ameers of Andalusia: these they so effectually surrounded and hemmed in, that they could no longer see each other, and the darkness produced by that mass was as the shadows of an obscure night. The Moslemah held themselves for lost; they began to retreat, and the Christians continued to press them so closely, that they were soon in full flight towards Badajoz. The cavalry of Seville alone maintained its ground; but the valiant cavaliers of Aben Abed kept their faces to the foe, being commanded by the brave and vigorous Almutamed, their king, in person: these fought like wounded lions, although surrounded on all sides by the enemy, who poured on that part of the force the most formidable weight of his fury; nor have the renowned soldiers of the Sevillian horse at any time given more terrible proof of their steadiness and courage than on that day, as the slaughtered Infidels lying around them in ghastly heaps made horribly manifest.

King Juzef now received advice of the rout and calamitous retreat of the Andalusians, which had then become a disorderly flight; but he was at the same time informed of the noble manner in which Aben Abed was maintaining his ground, though enduring the fiercest brunt of the battle with the second division of Alfonso's army, while his own general Davoud Aben Ayxa was fully justifying his ancient reputation in the conflict with that portion of the Christian troops which were conducted by Alfonso himself. Yet many noble Moslemah were meanwhile dying as good and brave men alone know how to do; wherefore Juzef Aben Taxfin sent his general Syr Aben Bekir with the Alarabian Cabilas to reinforce the noble generals Davoud Aben Ayxa and Aben Abed, King of Seville.

The Moslemah tribes of the Zenetes, Masamudes, and Gomares, then got into motion, with the troops taken from other Cabilas of Barbary, whom Juzef Ben Taxfin had retained in his reserve, the King of the Moslemah himself advancing with his guard of the tribe of Lamtuna, the Almoravide Cabilas, and others of Zenete, those of Zanhaga

being in like manner called into action,—and all that force directed their march on the camp and pavilion of King Alfonso.

The Christian monarch himself was meanwhile involved in the hottest of the fight, and, far from the line of march chosen by the wily Juzef, had left his camp but slightly defended: the troops of the Almoravide sovereign thus found no great difficulty in penetrating to the tents of the Infidels. These they cut to pieces and destroyed in a short time, and after a feeble defence they made themselves masters of the royal pavilion, setting fire to the camp in many places, and breathing dismay into the hearts of all therein.

King Alfonso, as above said, was at that time engaged in the fiercest of the battle; he had defeated the troops of Davoud Aben Ayxa, and the Moslemah were flying in confusion, when the cavalry of Alfonso beheld the rout of their own soldiers, whom they had left to guard their camp, and believed in safety, but whom they now saw hurrying to them for refuge, while the King of the Moslemah, with his victorious rearguard, their Atambores beating and colours flying, followed close upon them in eager pursuit. The brave Almoravides cut down whole swarms of the Infidels with those resistless swords, which, still thirsting for their blood, were seeking to appease themselves in the streams of the same, now growing to lakes around them. These were the forces returning from the destruction of the Christian camp, where they had burnt and destroyed the tents, had plundered the harem and pavilion of the king, and had found so vast an amount of treasure therein that the loss sustained that day by the Infidels in their treasures might be considered almost equal to that of the blood which had flowed.

Then did the King Don Alfonso turn the might of his force on the Africans, and the Christian troops, advancing in perfect order of battle, fell on the people of King Juzef with indescribable impetuosity and rage. The struggle was then renewed between both armies with such wild fury and so atrocious a carnage that nothing like it had ever before been heard or seen. The Ameer Juzef Ben Taxfin himself rode frequently among the Moslemah, exhorting them to constancy, and calling on them to hold firmly to the last in that battle for God and His law. "O bands of the Moslemah,"

he exclaimed, "courage! courage in this your noble strife! Good heart! good heart in this holy fight. Behold! God hath already numbered and is diminishing these Infidels, while the reward of your valour will be crowns of paradise. Nay, those who have already fallen in this battle are even now enjoying the inexpressible glories of those delicious abodes which are to be theirs for eternity." Uttering these and similar words, the King of the Moslemah fought bravely in person at the same time. He was then mounted on his third horse, since he did not shrink from plunging into the most perilous parts of that ensanguined field. But there was no Mosleman who failed to fight on that day as if his sole desire had been the crown of martyrdom; and many there were who even appeared to seek eagerly the death which was to be followed by so glorious an awakening.

The King Aben Abed and his brave cavalry were meanwhile fighting in desperation, not knowing the state of the battle in other portions of the field; at length he unexpectedly beheld the Christian hordes flying routed across the plain at some distance from that part of the battle-ground whereon he was himself occupied, while the Moorish sabres, falling on the shoulders of the beaten Infidels, were making havoc and confusion among their ranks. Beholding this, the king called to his people with animated tones, "Up, my friends! once more up and be with them, for God hath counted their moments." He then resumed the struggle with increased eagerness, being seconded by the troops which Syr Ben Abi Bekir had led forth from the Cabilas of Zeneta, Masumuda and Gomara. These completed the defeat of the Christian host, and those of the Moslemah who had broken in disorder at the commencement of the battle, having also recovered from their panic, and returned from their flight towards Badajoz, the total rout of the Infidel was secured.

All this was the result of the advantage obtained by Juzef Aben Taxfin, for no sooner was it reported that the camp of the Christians had been destroyed, and that the pavilion of their king was in the hands of the Moslemah, than troop after troop of those who had either fled or were still wavering, returned with fresh ardour to the conflict, insomuch that the enemy was at length defeated on every point,

but the slaughter was nevertheless continued until the setting of the sun.

And now, when the King Don Alfonso discovered, as night sank down, that all his army was indeed destroyed, and his bravest leaders no more, he saw well that, the bravery of the Almoravide forces considered, with the close union sure to prevail among all the Moslemah in this their sacred war, there remained to him no other resource than flight, and became assured that the thought of renewing the fearful chances of battle neither could nor ought to be entertained. He took his way from the field, therefore, in profound despair, uncertain whither he should direct his steps, and thus, with five hundred followers only, he rode fast before the conquering Almoravides. These warriors did not cease to persecute the fugitives* as they pursued their unknown way across mountain and valley; picking them off as the pigeons pick the grains of corn, until dark night at length interposed her dusky veil between the Moslemah and his prey.

The hours of that night which still remained were passed by the Moslemah victors among the Christian corpses that bestrewed the field: these they despoiled of their arms and other valuables, which they piled into great heaps, while they sang praises to Allah for the favour and protection he had vouchsafed to their efforts. Thus then did they remain until the hour of dawn, and the prayer of Asohbi was made in the midst of the battle-field.

This was one of the most terrible slaughters that God hath ever inflicted on His enemies by the hands of the Faithful, and the most wonderful of all the battles fought for the law. Before the end of that struggle the most illustrious of the Christian nobles and those who were the bravest defenders and protectors of their creed were laid dead on the soil. The tyrant Alfonso himself did not escape without great difficulty: the fact that the horses of that small company of cavaliers by which he was attended being

* Muhamad Abdelaziz, who was one of the household of King Aben Abed at this period, relates that in this flight a negro slave belonging to King Juzef wounded Alfonso in the thigh with his curved scimitar, when the Gallician monarch was heard to say, "The slave hath assailed me with his sickle."—*Condé.*

of extraordinary swiftness, alone enabled them to make good their flight. But even of these his followers many died of their wounds on the way, insomuch that four hundred cavaliers and about one hundred of his life guard and household was the whole force with which the Gallician king returned to the city of Toledo.

This fortunate and remarkable day was a Friday, the 14th* day of the moon Regeb, in the year 479. On that day God presented the rewards of their faith and the crown of their martyrdom to about three thousand of our Mosleman brethren; but as to the Christians, their heads alone, which the Ameer Amumenin commanded his people to cut off, are alleged to have made heaps like great towers, when piled up in his presence, and the Alfaki Abu Yahye relates that he heard many of the Moslemah, who were present at that glorious battle, declare the height of the heads so amassed to have overtopped the longest lances, as they were placed by the side of those ghastly mountains. Abu Meruan Aben Hayan, who was himself in the fight, assures us that the heads were counted from motives of mere curiosity, before Aben Abed, King of Seville, and that those who reckoned them went as far as twenty-four thousand without having finished the count. But Abdel Halim tells us what does indeed seem incredible; he declares that the King of the Moslemah, even Juzef Aben Taxfin, sent ten thousand of those heads to Seville, ten thousand to Cordova, and ten thousand to Valencia, with the same number to Saragossa and Murcia respectively; all which being done, Abdel Halim hath furthermore affirmed that the King despatched forty thousand to Africa, where he commanded that they should be distributed among the cities of the land, to the end that the people, seeing these trophies, might give thanks to God for the great favour he had conferred on the Moslemah arms in so important and renowned a victory. He adds that the number of the Infidels must have been at least eighty thousand horse and one hundred thousand foot, of which number there escaped but very few from the field. By that stupendous triumph of the Law God did so profoundly humiliate the

* Abdelkalim says that the battle of Zalacca was fought in the 2nd decade of the moon Regeb, but does not specify the day.—*Condé.*

pride of the Christians in Spain that they did not raise their heads again for nearly seventy years.

On that day King Juzef Ben Taxfin assumed the title of Ameer Amuslimin, or King of the Moslemah, which he had not before permitted himself to do; but now that God had conferred so great a triumph on Islam by his hand and lent such vast force to his arms, he consented to call himself by that august title. He wrote an account of the signal victory he had obtained, to his people on the African side of the sea, and also to Temim El Maun, Lord of Almedina. The news thereof were likewise published in all the territories of Africa, Almagreb, and Spain, where they were received with universal rejoicings. Thus the fame of this great victory becoming extended through all the lands of the Faithful, caused the people to increase in fervour, zeal, and charity, all giving thanks to God for that singular benefit.

The letter relating the matter which was sent to the opposite shores by the Ameer Amuslimin, Juzef Aben Taxfin, was in the words that follow:

CHAP. XVII.—Relation of the victory of Zalacca sent to the African shores by Juzef Ben Taxfin, and by Aben Abed to Medina Sevilla.

"Due praise being first given to God the Highest, the zealous Defender of His Law, benedictions, increase o felicity, and perfection to our Lord Muhamad his excellent messenger, the most noble and most honoured of created beings.

"We had no sooner approached the camp of the enemy of God, the tyrant Alfonso—on whom be the curses of Allah! - and agreed among ourselves as to what it behoved us to do, than we announced our determination to the Infidel King, and made him our propositions, giving him the choice of three things—Islam, the Tribute, or War; and he preferred War

"Then it was resolved that the battle should be given on Monday, the 12th of the moon Regeb, for he said, 'The Friday is the festival of the Moslemah, the Saturday that of

the Jews,—and we have many of both in our army,—while the Sunday is our festival; let us then agree to choose a day, and let it be Monday.'

"But this tyrant and his people did not keep their word, they departed from it according to their custom,—a thing which increased our fury and just anger in the fight. Suspecting his perfidious intent, we had taken care to place our spies in observation, and these gave us notice of their movements. At the hour of dawn on the 12th day of Regeb, accordingly, which was Friday,* we received intelligence that preparations for attack had been made in the camp of the enemy, who was furthermore declared to be instantly coming upon us, but to his own downfall and ruin. Then the most valiant Moslemah rose up to proceed against him, at once commencing to work him woe upon woe, and to strike his bands to the earth in numbers beyond all numeration. As the eagles to their prey, so did the Moslemah forces rush upon the host of the enemy, the cavalry hastening to repel the attack of the Christian horde with the force of the valiant lion. Our banners of felicity, of victory, and of illustrious martyrdom, extended ever more and more widely across the field. The power of Lamtuna bore onward full of terror for Alfonso Ben Ferdeland and when the Christians beheld our standard of faith and triumph floating over their heads, the splendour of our conquering cavalry bewildered them, they were dazzled and dismayed, as by the lightnings of terror and confusion. The tempest-bearing cloud of our lances overshadowed them, and sinking beneath the blades of the Faithful, they were trampled by the hoofs of their own ferocious horses, their death-cry sounding piteously amidst the crashing thunder of the Atambours.

"Into that snare then, fell the Christians and their tyrant even Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, while proposing to deceive by his stratagems the sons of the Faith; but the valiant

* The day (Juma, or Friday), which was but vaguely attended to in the account given of the opening of the battle in the text, is clearly stated, and proves that the 14th, or Monday, given by other authorities, is not the correct date.

Almoravides taught them the truth of the matter. In the mighty whirlwind of that impetuous strife, our swords, glancing in crimson as they waved high in air, and the sharp lances with their penetrating points, drew forth from the wounds which they opened, deep rivers of blood flowing fast from the hordes of the foe, over whose slain we made our passage in the name of the all-powerful Allah, the Mighty and Exalted Protector.

"Every one of our own brave warriors stood ready on his part to exhibit the like purple streams before the people of Afranc and the accursed Alfonso, so that all the four hundred cavaliers, whom alone he saved alive of the eighty thousand horsemen and one hundred thousand foot soldiers, whom he had brought into that battle, might swim therein and satiate themselves with the same. But that host of the Infidel was a people whom God the Highest had destined to the wheels of destruction, there to be ground and crushed to nothingness, seeing that He permitted to escape with their lives but a few of that accursed race, and these were suffered to live only to the end that, looking down from a mountain, they might thence behold the extent of their calamity. Oh, evil sight for them! and great trial of such patience as they might find to console them in that hour of irremediable despair and raging indignation, as they bethought them that all reprisals were impossible, and that to them the hope of vengeance must be a forbidden thing. Nay, there was nothing left to Alfonso but the vain and miserable resource of groans and lamentations, nor had he any refuge save that of hiding himself in the darkness of the obscure and death-black night.

"The Ameer of the Moslemah, the leader of the sacred war, the enumerator and destroyer of inimical hosts, the victorious Juzef Aben Taxfin, after thanks rendered to Allah, now reposes in a blessed security, reclined on the chariot of his triumph and of victory, beneath the shadow of those conquering banners which are the ensigns of protection and glory. And already the flowing rivers of his greatness, the Nile-stream of his increasing power, hath been poured forth impetuously, in the persons of his warriors, on the cities and fortresses of the foe. The Faithful are desolating

the fields of the Christian, and are loading his captive people with fetters, the Ameer beholding all this w th eyes of complacency and delight, while the tyrant Alfonso regards the same with dismayed and troubled glances, that turn giddy and are bewildered at the sight.

"Of the Ameers of Spain, Aben Abed, King of Seville alone was found to be constant in the fight; he alone refused to turn his face for the fear of the cruel carnage, maintaining his ground and fighting steadily, as should the bravest and noblest warrior of his land, and in a manner fully worthy of him who held the place of principal leader of the Moslemah. Yet he came forth from the battle with only a slight wound in the side, and this shall serve him as a glorious remembrance of that stupendous conflict wherein he received the same.

"Alfonso Ben Ferdeland, sheltered beneath the shadows of the darksome night, saved his life by a hasty flight, without certain road or direction, nor did he give his sorrowful eyes to sleep through those dreary hours. Nay, of the five hundred cavaliers with whom he fled the field, four hundred perished in that difficult way, and he entered into the city of Toledo with one hundred only. For all this be thanks to God the Highest!"

That singular favour and glorious victory of Zalacca was conferred on the Moslemah forces on Friday, the 12th day of the moon Regeb, in the year 479, corresponding to the 2nd and 3rd of the month of October in the year 1686. It was celebrated by Alebata, Aben Gemhur, and other good poets, in elegant verses, but it is a truth that the Ameers of Spain did not acquit themselves well on that day. Aben Abed of Seville was the only one of them who merited praise and eternal remembrance, but he did so, and the same may be said of the Sevillian cavaliers whom he led: since both he and those of his company performed feats of admirable prowess. Some writers affirm that Aben Abed bore off six glorious wounds from that field, and he himself implies something of the same kind, in certain verses which he wrote soon after to his son the Prince Obeidallah Arraxid. These authors furthermore tell us that at the set of the sun on that day of Zalacca, the King of Seville was compelled by

the state of those wounds to remain in his pavilion, while King Juzef and his Almoravides were in pursuit of the Christians; but they add that his contentment and delight at the victory were such, that, wounded as he was, he took the fragment of a scroll not broader than a finger, and wrote thereon the result of the battle, sending the lines to his son, who was then in Seville. The few words thus written were as follow:—

"To my son Raxid, whom God hold perfected by his grace! The Mosleman force hath met the proud Alfonso, and God hath given the victory to the Faithful, conquering the Infidels by their hands, for which be thanks to God, for He is the upholder of all things. Make this known to all the Faithful who are with thee. Farewell." Then he closed his letter, and fastened it beneath the wing of a carrier-pigeon, which he had brought from Seville for that purpose, and which now served as the messenger of those glorious news.

Yahye relates that the people of Seville were in no small doubt and anxiety meanwhile, much desiring to be delivered from their suspense, and not yet knowing of the success of their army, when they beheld the dove arriving at the Alcazar of Aben Abed. She was instantly taken, and the little billet which she had borne beneath her wing being unsealed, was read to all the people in the principal mosque. Then the whole city was filled with gladness, and they began to make a great festival, rejoicing and giving thanks to God. A few days later they received a more minute relation of that great event, and as Aben Abed wrote to the people of Seville, so did Metuakil Omar Ben Alaftas, King of Valencia; Almudafar, Ameer of Badajoz; the Vizier of Cordova, Abu Bekir Mohamad; and Abdallah, King of Granada, to their people respectively: and the same was done by the rest of the Ameers, each writing an account to his people, insomuch that the victory was made known by those letters and relations to every part of Spain.

The letter of King Aben Abed was as follows:—

Praise be to God.

'The 12th day of the moon Regeb, in the year 479, having come, God made manifest a decree of His eternal wisdom and irrevocable will, written in the resplendent

characters of divine fire on the tablets of destiny. This decree opened to us the gates whereby we were to come forth from many oppressions and tribulations, entering instead thereof on a path that leadeth to much felicity and good fortune.

"It was permitted to us by the Merciful, the Giver of all things, the Acceptor of contrition, the Pardoner of our sins, that we should meet the arrogant enemy of the Faith, to our glory and to his confusion.

"He commenced by certain falsehoods and deceits, whereby he purposed to offend and do us wrong, but the Infidel fell into the snare which he had prepared for our feet, for such was the divine destination of eternal justice. His false and deceptive precipitation was the presage of felicity to the Faithful, the deceit whereby the enemy of Allah would have betrayed us, brought the air of victory, full of soft and cheering fragrance, to our banners, and this beneficent breeze the treachery of the Infidel could not dissipate, nor could his anger turn it aside.

"Our Moslemah prepared their arms, resplendent as the light, and covered their horses with caparisons of silk; they then awaited with impatience the coming of the day wherein they were to mingle themselves in the ranks of the foe, and become involved amidst those Infidel hordes, in lakes and streams of whose blood they were to slake the fiery thirst of their swords. The felicitous dawn which was to make us conquerors at length arrived, it appeared in radiance, calling us to action from the heights of blessedness, and, as it were, exciting all to combat by these words: 'The day hath dawned! the day hath dawned! and no long time hence shall come forth the sun, his bright rays scorching the Infidels, who shall this day find no shade or shelter beneath which they may conceal themselves from the noontide resplendence of his fires.'

"Never yet hath a more auspicious dawn appeared for the Moslemah arms; we put our troops into order of battle, the generals and valiant men beginning to place themselves in the positions destined for them; yet it was not without some commotion and heaving of the heart that we bound the linen wrappers of our turbans fast to our heads. We

made a short profession of faith, and presently afterwards the earth trembled beneath our feet as we moved to that fight which was soon to make us glitter with the radiance of the victory given to his army by God the divine Protector, whom no human tongue can describe, nor the understanding of any creature of Allah comprehend.

"In the first encounters there were some signs of dread defeat and consternation for the Moslemah, many of the noblest among them falling a prey to the fury of the foe, whose countless numbers came upon us, impetuous as the torrent that rushes from the mountains, and these carried many away in their rage. But that imminent peril having passed, God bade victory descend upon our banners, and the edge of our Moslemah swords reaped an abundant harvest of Infidel throats. Allah had made us promise of the victory, and announced a favourable conclusion, and Allah is no vain breaker of his promise, but fulfilleth the compact made with minute exactitude.

"And now reflect on this felicity, celebrate the great good fortune as its importance merits; rejoice in it with us, and give thanks to the Conqueror, even to Allah, for none is the conqueror save God alone, nor is there force or power save in His hand: wherefore say ye with us, 'Thanks be to God, the creator and preserver of all things, for the happiness which he sent us at the dawn and the blessing which continued till the night."

This battle of Zalacca was the most fortunate and eventful of any fought by the Moslemah since that of Yarmuz and the day of Cadisia, seeing that the battle, or rather the Infidel downfall of Zalacca, caused the seat of Islam to be made firm in Andalusia: and whereas before that time the foot of the believer had become feeble, and was slipping away from the path traced out for him by the hand of God, it now became confirmed in strength, and the Faithful returned to their pristine constancy in the law.

CHAP. XVIII.—RETURN OF JUZEF ABEN TAXFIN TO AFRICA. OF THE CAMPAIGNS OF THE ALMORAVIDES, AND OF ABEN ABED, KING OF SEVILLE. HUESCA TAKEN BY THE CHRISTIANS AFTER THE VICTORY OF ALCORAZA. SECOND COMING OF THE KING OF THE MOSLEMAH, JUZEF ABEN TAXFIN.

The chronicles relate that some few days after this victory, and while the Moslemah were still occupied with the distribution of the spoils gathered therein, the rich vestments, the costly arms, the gilded swords, the gorgeous girdles and shoulder belts of price, the precious lances inlaid with ivory, silver, and other metals, with such riches as words can find no name to denote, there came a messenger of great woe from Africa to the camp of Juzef Aben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah. This envoy brought intelligence of the death of Abu Bekir Seir, a son of Juzef the king, whom he had left grievously sick at Morocco; by this event Aben Taxfin was rendered very sorrowful, and the great rejoicings which the Moslemah were making for their victory were thereby diminished.

The Ameer now determined to repair immediately to Africa, whither he would not have returned so early but on that account. He gave the command of the Almoravide troops, whom he ordered to continue in Spain, to his general, Syr Abi Bekir, and then departing immediately, he embarked and passed over to Morocco, in which city he remained until the year 480.*

The army of the Almoravides then directed their march along the frontier line of Gallicia, recovering as they went the towns and fortresses which had been taken from the Moslemah by the Christians: they were accompanied in that campaign by Aben Alaftas, King of Badaljos.

Syr Ben Bekir, the most crafty of the Almoravide generals, and the one in whom Juzef Aben Taxfin confided the most implicitly, was meanwhile occupied in close observation of the disposition of the country, the state of the towns, and the strength of the fortresses; and so did he pass the time until the arrival of the year 480.

The King of Seville, Aben Abed, who understood the

* A.D. 1036 or 1087.

requirements of the times better than any other of the Andalusian Ameers, also did his best to profit by the opportunity presented to him, and with a body of light horse he made incursions into the territory of Toledo, occupying numerous towns and fortresses, of which the King Don Alfonso had previously obtained possession, even by means of Aben Abed himself, and in consequence of the treaties formerly entered into between them. In this manner Aben Abed recovered the fortresses of Uklis, Huebte, Cuenca, Conseura, and others. He then returned towards the territory of Murcia; but in the district of Loxa he found his passage barred by certain companies of the Christian cavalry, who had sallied forth to that end, and now compelling the King of Seville to battle, they defeated him with considerable loss. These Christian cavaliers were the Alcaides of the frontier, who there held command for the tyrant Alfonso.

Aben Abed was then compelled to retire, and took refuge in Loxa, where he was amicably received by the governor, Muhamad Aben Leboun, who was the son of Isa Ben Leboun, to whom Aben Abed had himself formerly given the government of the city, and who had fought like the brave soldier that he was, in the battle of Zalacca. With Isa was his valiant friend, Husein Aben Zeraug, from whom it was that Abu Becar Ben Alcabotorna received a grave reproof; for that he, Alcabotorna, enjoying the reputation of being a brave soldier, did yet remain at Badaljos, while his brethren of the Faith were contending with infidels in the battle of Zalacca.

The campaign of Aben Abed against the territory of Murcia was but of slight effect on that occasion, because the Christians had made themselves masters of the fortress of Alid, which is twelve miles distant from Loxa,* and is wonderfully strong, being erected on the top of a high mountain, one side of which formed an inaccessible precipice, on the summit whereof the fortress stood. When the King Don Alfonso had heard that Aben Abed was directing his march thitherward, he had moreover commanded that a large body of cross-bowmen should be marched to the place, which he had furthermore strength-

* Yahye tells us that Abed lay to the south of Loxa.—*Condé.*

ened by a force consisting of the flower of his campeadores, or light skirmishing troops, who had orders to make perpetual sallies from the fort, cutting up the fields, carrying off the flocks, burning the villages, and slaughtering the unfortunate inhabitants, or bearing them into captivity. The incursions thus made by the people of Alfonso were more terrible than the thunders of the tempest; they carried desolation and carnage through all the land of Murcia, which they ravaged from one end to the other with fire and sword.

At the end of the moon of Rebie Postrera, in the year 480, the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, travelled through the whole land of Almagreb, informing himself of the condition of the cities and their government, hearing the complaints of his subjects, and making numerous arrangements for the better administration of justice, and the promotion of good policy. While he was thus employed, his Almoravides were continuing their incursions on the country of Gallicia, where they took towns and fortresses, and made many captives.

In Andalusia, likewise, there still prevailed the sound of warfare. The King of Saragossa, Almustain Billah Abu Giafar, when he thought he might take his repose, and believed that the Christians, well chastised at Zalacca, would suffer him peacefully to enjoy the happiness of that victory, suddenly found himself attacked by a large host of those Infidels, led on by the tyrant Aben Radmir. The King of Saragossa went forth against Radmir with all the force he could gather at the moment, which might be about twenty thousand men, horse and foot together; but they were of the bravest and most hardy of the people—true pillars of Islam. These troops sallied forth, I say, to the encounter of those of Aben Radmir, whose force was about equal, and likewise consisted of cavalry and infantry.

Ben Hudeil describes the battle then delivered as taking place near Medina Huesca, on the borders of Eastern Spain,—which may God strengthen and protect! Both armies were very confident in their power, and each vaunted the bravery and dexterity of its leaders,—proved sons of war, lions practised in the fight,—the conflict began, and at the commencement thereof Aben Radmir—may God

destroy him!—said to his most distinguished cavaliers:—"Now this day shall ye tell me which of those valiant Moslemah who are here present in the battle, and are known to us by name, comports himself most manfully in the fight, and who among them retires from the struggle or conceals himself." He also said to others, of whom he called seven by their names:—"Do you and each of you give good heed to the brave warriors who shall this day distinguish themselves in our host, and observe whether such as are known for earlier deeds of prowess shall demean themselves according to their nobleness and the renown they have acquired." He then named one hundred of those distinguished men as being of the bravest, and to these he said:—"Up heart, warriors and friends! let us mark this day with a white stone. Up heart, and upon them!"

A moment later, and the opposing armies encountered each other with equal fearlessness and force. The battle was a very obstinate and sanguinary one, for none would turn his face from the terrors of death, nor would any man yield a step or stir from his post, much less from the field; every soldier desired that his captain should see him fighting with the bravery of a lion, and so they continued their strife until both armies, worn out with the continuance of their fatigues, suspended the deadly conflict at the hour of the Alazar.*

They then stood opposite to each other for about an hour, at the end of which time the enemy gave signal for the recommencement of the fight with his bugles and trumpets, as we did also with our Atambours.† The stubborn and sanguinary contest was then resumed with increased impetuosity, when the Christians attacked us with such obstinate pertinacity that they penetrated by troops amidst our ranks, thereby dividing our host, which, once separated, soon fell into confusion, and the resistance hitherto maintained being no longer presented, a disorderly flight ensued, the sword of the conqueror feasting on the necks of the Moslemah even to the coming of the night. King Almostain Billah El Zaguir Aben Hud and his immediate followers then took their way to the city of Huesca.

* Alazar, the afternoon prayer.—*Tr.* † Atambours, drums.

Then the Christians besieged Huesca, which they attacked with huge machines and engines of war, while the valiant Moslemah made frequent sallies, attacking the besiegers and destroying their works. In one of these sallies Aben Radmir, the King of the Christians, was wounded by an arrow and died of his wound; but not for that cause did the besiegers stay their hand: on the contrary, they demanded reinforcements, and continued to assault the city with those new troops, as men determined on the conquest of the place.

The Moslemah were now much exhausted; but Almostain Billah, having succeeded in getting out of the city, not only assembled a large force of his own people, but also requested aid from the Ameers of Albarrazin, Xativa, and Denia, who instantly hastened to his assistance.

Made aware of the approach of the army thus assembled, the Christians left their camp before Huesca, and proceeded to the encounter of their advancing foe. The battle which then ensued took place in the vicinity of Alcoraza. The two hosts met with great courage, and the conflict, which was an obstinate and sanguinary one, endured till the coming of night put an end to the carnage. Now the Moslemah had sustained grievous loss in that struggle, and the chiefs, being of divers kingdoms, as hath been related, began to accuse each other on that account, nor would they wait the event of a new combat, which they might have fought and won on the succeeding day; on the contrary, in the course of the night one retired in one direction, and one in another, leaving a vast amount of dead and wounded on the hills and in the valleys, where they lay as an agreeable offering to the wild beasts and birds of prey. The King Almostain Billah withdrew to Saragossa, having lost all hope of saving the city of Huesca, and a few months later, that place was compelled to capitulate to the Christians, which it did after making the best conditions of surrender that could be obtained.

Full of vexation at the results of his campaign in Murcia, the King of Seville first retired to Cordova, but soon departed thence and repaired to Seville, because he found all the enterprises which he desired to undertake rendered nugatory by the contending interests of the Ameers of

Andalusia, which were now found to be at direct variance with those of Juzef, as upheld by the generals of Lamtuna. Aben Abed was nevertheless desirous of retaining the services of the Almoravides, since it was manifest that, with his own unassisted forces, he could not make head against the war again declaring itself on many different points at one and the same time; but he was most of all anxious to secure that those troops should be used at his own discretion, and he now wrote letters to Juzef Aben Taxfin, describing the devastations which the infidels were committing on the lands of the Moslemah, not only in the south of Spain, but on its eastern frontier also. He dwelt more particularly on the ravages committed by El Cambitur,* a Christian prince who was then cruelly infesting the frontiers of Valencia.

Aben Abed furthermore declared to King Juzef that his Almoravide forces at that time in Spain were not led or commanded as was befitting, and added that if the heavy cares and important occupations of the King of the Moslemah in Africa did not permit him to return into Spain, he, Aben Abed, would himself repair in person to Morocco, there to receive his orders and ascertain his intentions,—which done, the King of Seville would then do his best to turn the force left in Spain by Juzef to the best account, and avail himself of the fortune of his victorious banners to ensure further victories to Islam. Without awaiting the reply to his letters, Aben Abed crossed over to Africa, where he hoped to receive from Juzef—whom he believed too busily occupied in Almagreb to think of revisiting Spain—the supreme power over and command of the Almoravide troops.

Having passed the sea, Aben Abed met the Ameer of the Moslemah in the Maamura, which lies at the mouth of the Wadi Selua; and Juzef received him with much affability. The usual compliments having been made, and all the usages of courtesy fulfilled, the Almoravide sovereign inquired what event had occurred which was of sufficient importance to cause the passage of Aben Abed into Africa, adding that a letter from his hand would have been sufficient to persuade him to any undertaking whatever.

* The Cid Campeador.—*Condé.*

Aben Abed replied, that his principal motive had been the wish he felt to pay King Juzef a visit, which was both a profit and a pleasure to himself; but that he had also come to assure the Ameer in person of the pressing necessity that existed for his again making war on the Christians,—thus perfecting that protection of the Law which had been so happily commenced by his invincible hand. The King of Seville added, that although a letter would in truth have sufficed to move the generous heart of Juzef Aben Taxfin to that undertaking, yet that he had preferred to come in person, in order to secure the merit of having done so; and furthermore, that he might inform Juzef exactly of what it was important he should know, respecting the condition of the Moslemah in Spain, to the end that the rich fruits of his glorious campaign might not be lost.

Aben Abed then spoke of the small progress made by the Almoravides in Algarve, attributing that circumstance to the fact that their commanders had more bravery than experience or knowledge of strategy: he described the ravages which the Christians who held the fortress of Alid were committing in that district, and insisted at great length on the variety of interests which divided the Ameers and generals of Andalusia, not omitting the affair of Huesca, and concluding with the declaration that, for want of effectual assistance and union among themselves, the Andalusians would apparently suffer that city and its territory to be lost to Islam.

From these representations Aben Abed had hoped much more than he gained, seeing that Juzef met all those arguments by which the Sevillian monarch had hoped to ensure the command of the Almoravide troops, with replies of a totally opposite tendency, but took much pains to console him for the misfortunes and anxieties which in his heart Aben Abed did not very deeply mourn. Juzef promised, moreover, that he would himself pass over to Spain without delay, bringing what he hoped would prove an effectual remedy for those evils which were afflicting the state: he added that he would endeavour to tear up by the roots that cause of sorrow by which the Moslemah were made to suffer so grievously.

With this vague promise King Juzef dismissed Aben Abed,

who returned to Spain, and was compelled to content himself with the assurance that the King of the Moslemah would also repair to that country without loss of time. And in effect, King Juzef followed almost immediately on the departure of Aben Abed, embarking at the Alcazar of Mogez and landing on the Green Island, where the King of Seville had no sooner heard of his arrival, than he set forward to receive him as at the first time, commanding, moreover, that a vast amount of provisions in every kind should be made ready to entertain the Ameer of the Moslemah, and loading many beasts of burthen with rich gifts to be presented to him. A thousand camels, all magnificently caparisoned and loaded with objects of the utmost value, were likewise sent to meet the King Juzef on his debarkation.

The Ameer had no sooner landed than he wrote and despatched letters to all the rulers of Spain, requiring them to join their forces to his for the sacred war: he appointed the plains before the fortress of Alid, in the Comarcas of Lorca, as the place of their meeting, and without further delay commenced his march in that direction. This took place in the moon of Rebie Primera, in the year of the Hegira 481; and Yahye tells us that Juzef arrived before Malaga with his own army and the troops of Abed, King of Seville only, but was there joined by the force of the lord of that city, who was then Temim, the son of Balkin Ben Habus and brother of the King of Granada. The same writer observes that there afterwards rose and followed them the King of Granada himself, even Almudafar Abdallah, who was also the son of Balkin.

The King of Almeria, Almutasim Ben Samida, who was a great friend of Aben Abed, King of Seville, likewise joined the army with a strong force at that same time. The sovereign of Almeria wore at his arrival a black mantle, after the manner of the Ameer Juzef and the Almoravides, which caused his friend Aben Aben to reproach him playfully, and call him a crow among the doves, seeing that the cavaliers of Almeria are wont to use white clothing. The Walies and governors of the cities of Vaza, Jaen, and Lorca, arrived at this time, as did the brave Muhamad Aben Leboun, Aben Iza, and some others. From Murcia there

came Abdelaziz Aben Rasih, one of the chief nobles of Spain, who held the city of Murcia for Aben Abed, King of Seville, but enjoyed and governed the same as a sovereign prince, without the acknowledgment of any tribute or payment of impost.

The forces thus united now seated themselves before the fortress, in which there were twelve thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry, a bold and valiant garrison, by whom surprises were attempted and sallies made against the Moslemah with great persistence; but the latter repulsed them with much bravery, soon after compelling them to shut themselves up, with the correction of a severe lesson. The fortress of Alid was assaulted by the Moslemah with every kind of machine and engine of war, but the natural strength of the position was such that they produced but little effect, and the citadel maintained itself in a manner that left but slight hope of its surrender. The siege was carried on, nevertheless, with much constancy, the Ameers of Andalusia conducting the assaults each in his turn and on fixed days. Thus did matters continue for some months, during which there was great anxiety lest the King Don Alfonso should bring succours to the place; and that fear redoubled the zeal with which the siege was pressed forward.

CHAP. XIX. — OF THE CONTENTIONS WHICH AROSE AMONG THE MOSLEMAH. JUZEF BEN TAXFIN REPAIRS TO AFRICA IN FEAR OF THE KING DON ALFONSO: HE RETURNS TO SPAIN, ARRIVES AT TOLEDO, AND PROCEEDS TO CORDOVA. THE ALMORAVIDES BECOME PREDOMINANT IN SPAIN.

Now the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin, and Aben Abed, King of Seville, considered that under these circumstances it would be advisable to attack the frontier of the Christians, and make incursions on their territory: they consequently assembled a council, but the opinions were found to vary widely; Abdelaziz Aben Rasih would not consent to have the forces then occupied in the siege impoverished by any other employment of their arms, but desired to invest the fortress until they had compelled a

surrender and were masters of the place. That opinion was partaken by Almutasim of Almeria, Leboun of Lorca, and other leaders; while the contrary was supported by Abdallah Ben Balkir of Granada, who took part with Aben Abed, King of Seville. These last declared that no more time should be lost, observing that the best method of proceeding now to be adopted was to raise the siege of Alid, and permit the besieged to come forth, seeing that, although they kept all the force of the Moslemah at bay while thus shut up, yet it would not be difficult to defeat them in the open field, and adding that the moments wasted before those inaccessible walls were irredeemable, since the delay thus permitted gave the Christians opportunity for making good their late losses, and setting the whole result of the Moslemah expedition on the hazard of a chance. Each now began to support his opinion with a certain degree of warmth which menaced to become alarming. Aben Abed reproached Abdelaziz Ben Rasih with ingratitude, and declared the opinion which he had expressed to be the result of intelligence with the King Don Alfonso. Abdelaziz, a young man of ardent character, then laid hand on his sword, resolving to strike Aben Abed to the earth; whereupon King Juzef commanded that Ben Rasih should be seized, and Aben Abed himself made him prisoner in the presence of Juzef. The King of Seville was then charged with his guardianship, and immediately cast him into prison.

When the troops of the lord of Murcia, Abdelaziz Ben Rasih, heard of that event, they broke forth into mutiny, and hastily striking their tents, marched from the camp with all their munitions of war; nor was it possible to dissuade them from that step, the generals also considering themselves to have been deeply offended by the imprisonment of their commander. Nay, the Murcian leaders not only persisted in their departure, but having established a separate camp on the confines of the district, they intercepted the provisions which were proceeding to the Leaguer of the Moslemah force then lying before Alid, detaining and plundering all the convoys, insomuch that the want of food began to make itself felt among the army, and very frequent desertions ensued.

When the King Don Alfonso was informed of what was

passing in the Moslemah camp, he directed his march on Alid with a select body of cavalry, giving orders that a large force should be moved on the same point from various parts of his dominions, and directing others to assemble before Murcia. Alfonso being thus found to approach, as had been anticipated by the King of Seville, Juzef Ben Taxfin began to retire towards the confines of Lorca* and the territory of Almeria, whence the King of the Moslemah subsequently embarked and passed over into Africa, not daring to wait for the King of the Christians, who soon arrived with his forces at Alid, whence Aben Abed, King of Seville, had also retired upon Lorca but a short time previously, and there the latter remained to watch the movements of the enemy. The rest of the Ameers also departed from Alid, each on his separate way, and every one returned to his own territories.

The King Don Alfonso having thus disembarrassed Alid of its besiegers, then dismantled the fortress, because he saw clearly that, surrounded as it was by the territories of the Moslemah, that hold could not possibly maintain itself. It was besides a place which demanded a large number of men for its defence: he therefore withdrew the famished garrison, which had then become reduced to a few half-starved men, the mere refuse of the harvest which death had there cut down. Alfonso then proceeded to Toledo, and Aben Abed, who was closely observing his movements, immediately took possession of Alid. That stubborn hold, which had given to the Moslemah so much hard work, and which boasted as its defence twelve thousand very valiant Christians, with one thousand cavalry, and the needful amount of servants, when first besieged by Juzef Ben Taxfin, was found by Alfonso to be reduced to a very small number, who had with difficulty saved themselves from dying of hunger after having escaped the sword in many an assault, surprise, and sally. One hundred cavaliers were all that the Christian King withdrew from the place. These things happened in the year 483.

The continued hostilities of the Christians against the

* According to Abu Yahye, the Ameer Juzef remained for some time at Tiriasa, a place of great beauty, richly supplied with streams and fountains.—*Condé.*

Moslemah, and the letters of his General Syr Ben Bekir, commander of the Almoravides, now induced King Juzef to pass for the third time into Spain. He did not come because invited by the Kings of Andalusia, but rather filled with anger against them, and entertaining wholly new intentions. Nay, under the pretext of vengeance to be taken upon the Christian, he was indeed led by ambition and the covetous wish to appropriate the kingdoms of Spain to his own use, and to make himself master of the whole: nor had all his dissimulation been sufficient to save him from giving some indication of that purpose, and of the aggressions which he was meditating in his heart. More than one of the Andalusian princes had felt suspicious of his designs, and each began to take measures for the security of his own interest, with all the care and foresight that he possessed.

The first who perceived the change of purpose and detected the designs of Juzef Ben Taxfin was Abdallah Ben Balkin Ben Habus, King of Granada; and that circumstance becoming known to Syr Aben Bekir, general of the Almoravides, he wrote to his lord those letters which caused Juzef to pass over into Spain for the third time, with the pretext of the Sacred War. The King of the Moslemah gathered a vast force from the various Cabilas of his African dominions; the host thus assembled being chiefly composed of Zenetes, Masamudes, Gomares, and Gazales, with whom he disembarked very happily at Algezira-Alhadra. Pursuing the advice of his generals, he thence proceeded by uninterrupted marches to the frontiers of Toledo, besieging the King Don Alfonso in that city. May Allah restore it to Islam!

The army of the Almoravides then addressed itself to the task of exhausting the Comarcas: the African troops destroyed the pleasant gardens, devastated the fields, burnt the villages, and slaughtered the people in countless numbers, taking captive, moreover, whatever they preferred rather to keep alive, among those hapless dwellers in the land. But on this occasion no one of the princes of Andalusia came to the aid of Juzef Ben Taxfin; nay, they were now learning what was the weight of his sword, and saw well that in proportion as he destroyed the Christians, so did he

menace their own heads, since he was even then imagining evil against them, and preparing treacherous deceits.

Juzef on his part soon permitted it to be apparent that he was not displeased by that conduct on the part of the Ameers of Andalusia, since it furnished him with a pretext for declaring himself offended by them. Without halting any long time before Toledo, therefore, he departed with his forces to Granada, and entering that city, he took up his abode in the Alcazar, where he was received with much hospitality and a show of great confidence by the King Abdallah Ben Balkin Aben Badis; although the latter had his heart full of dread at receiving a visit of so much import, and one accompanied by so large a force.

But King Juzef knew from his General Syr Aben Bekir, that Abdallah, suspecting his purposes, had made a secret treaty with the Christian King Don Alfonso, whose enterprises he was favouring, whom he considered as his friend, and to whom he was disposed to entrust the defence of his territories, while he was meanwhile busily occupied in fortifying and building holds on his frontiers with the utmost diligence and care. In allusion to this, therefore, there were then circulating the verses which follow:—

> "Here hast thou one who laboureth as the mule
> To turn the wheel, which with his heart's best blood
> He must anoint: or rather 'tis the worm
> Spinning her silky toils, to form the prison
> Wherein she dies enclosed."

The chronicles relate that before the arrival of Juzef Ben Taxfin, Abdallah had thought of resisting him, and closing the gates of the city; but Abu Yahye adds, that he subsequently determined to dissemble, and going forth to meet the King of the Moslemah, conducted him to his palace. Other writers affirm that the King of Granada openly defied Juzef Ben Taxfin, and closed the gates; but that Juzef having besieged the city, was afterwards admitted on certain conditions, under which compact of security the King of the Moslemah entered Granada, when Abdallah himself had calmed the fury of the people, who were well armed and determined to rise against the African Ameer,

having resolved to fight bravely, and defend their liberties to the death. Whether the first or the second of these accounts be the true one, certain it is that two months after the entrance of Juzef he made himself master of Granada, took Abdallah himself prisoner, and sent him, with his harem and household, to Agmat, near Morocco in Africa.

While the King of the Moslemah was thus remaining in Granada, where he was busying himself with the dispositions to be taken for the government of that city and of the kingdom, there came envoys from the Kings of Seville and Badajos to bid him welcome to his new lordship, he having caused it to be reported that Abdallah had ceded those territories to him in exchange for certain possessions in Africa. But Juzef would not receive the ambassadors of Seville and Badajos, nor permit them to have access to his presence; wherefore they returned full of care and bitterly mortified by the contemptuous treatment they had suffered.

At the same time, Almoatesim, King of Almeria, also sent his son Oveidallah Izeldola Abu Meruan to offer his good wishes to the King of the Moslemah, when Juzef detained the prince in his company under various pretexts, insomuch that he made him serve as a hostage,* until the youth, having succeeded in winning over his guards, escaped from the city in disguise, and returned by way of the sea to Almeria.

Thus did Juzef Aben Taxfin depose the King of Granada Abdallah Ben Balkin, and being much delighted with the beauty of the environs and the admirable position of the city, the King of the Moslemah proposed to reside there during all the time that he should for the future pass in Spain; but he then departed without delay to Africa, taking with him, as some writers affirm, the King of Granada and his brother Almustensir Temim, Governor of Malaga, who had also come forth to receive him, and whose city and government he seized as he had done those of Granada. The command of the Almoravide troops and the government of Granada were left by the Ameer to his general Syr Ben Bekir, El Lamtuna, all which being done,

* On that occasion the young prince wrote some elegant verses to his father, who replied to him in others of similar character.—*Condé.*

the King of the Moslemah embarked, and passed over to Morocco, where he arrived in the moon of Ramazan in the year 483.

Aben Abed, King of Seville, now saw the extent of the evil by which he was menaced, and began to repent, when it was too late, of having invited the Moors into Spain. He then laboured to fortify his cities, and restored the walls of Seville, with the bridge, which he carefully strengthened, and placed all in a state of defence with such diligence as he could use. Then his son the Prince Abu Hassan Obeidallah Raxid came to him, and said,—"I indeed perceived this tempest approaching, Oh my father, and gave thee warning thereof in good time, yet thou wouldst not regard my counsels, nor those of other prudent and noble Xeques, but hast drawn hither with thy hand this Prince from his Deserts, thus causing him to fall upon these our fair plains and delightful palaces." Then Aben Abed could find no argument by which to excuse his error, and contented himself with replying as follows: "There is no human diligence or care that can impede the events which God the Most High hath decreed."

The King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin, was meanwhile made acquainted with the suspicions entertained and the preparations made by the Ameers of Andalusia, whereupon he gave orders to the effect that a vast body of troops assembled in Cebta should instantly embark for Spain. This was done in his presence, and he confided the conduct of that force to Syr Ben Abi Bekir, whom he commanded to make himself master of Seville and its territories, directing him to proceed with caution and dissemble his purpose, to the end that he might take the city when unprovided for such an assault.

While Juzef was residing at Cebta, he caused the great mosque to be constructed in that city, commanding its towers to be raised to such a height that they should overpass every other building in the place; and they were indeed so lofty as to dominate the whole; furnishing, moreover, a very fine view of the sea. The king likewise erected the fountain of Bolat, which he caused to be supplied with numerous tubes, and he furthermore built the wall which is called that of the Lower Almina.

The orders given to the army, which Juzef Ben Taxfin despatched, as above said, to make war on the Ameers of Andalusia, were to the effect that the force should be divided into great corps: the command of the first, which was of itself sufficient to form a large host, being entrusted to Syr Ben Abi Bekir, who received a commission first to occupy the kingdom of Seville, and that done to pass forward against Aben Alaftas, King of Algarve. The second division Juzef confided to Abdallah Ben Giag, whom he ordered to proceed to Cordova against Aben Naser Alfetah, son of Aben Abed. The third corps was given to Abu Zacaria Ben Vesein, who was instructed to attack the territory of Almeria and its sovereign, Muhamad Ben Maun, called Almutasem; the fourth, which was the last, being commanded by Carur, El Lamtuni, received orders from Juzef to fall on the land of Ronda, where another son of Aben Abed, called Yelid Radillah, held the government. These forces all departed as above described, the King of the Moslemah himself remaining at Cebta, there to await the result of his enterprise and to provide all that future events might render needful to the success of his various undertakings.

CHAP. XX.—OF THE CONQUESTS OF THE ALMORAVIDES OVER THE MOSLEMAH OF SPAIN, OF THE DEFEAT OF THE ARMY OF ALFONSO ACTING IN FAVOUR OF ABEN ABED, OF THE TAKING OF SEVILLE, AND OF THE SUBSEQUENT FATE AND DEATH OF ABEN ABED.

THE Almoravide, Syr Ben Abi Bekir, penetrated without opposition into the territory of the King of Seville, and even expected to find that monarch coming half way to meet him, so soon as he should hear of his arrival, with gifts and magnificent hospitality, for the purpose of deceiving him by crafty pretensions of friendship: but nothing of the kind was done; no messenger went forth to meet the African general, nor was any salutation sent on the part of Aben Abed. Then Syr Aben Bekir despatched a letter, wherein he commanded the King of Seville to resign his territories, surrender his fortresses, and present himself in person to offer the oath of allegiance to Juzef Aben Taxfin, Prince of the Moslemah.

These demands did not come unexpectedly to the King, Aben Abed, nor was he suddenly disturbed by their arrival; he gave no reply to the letter of Syr Ben Abi Bekir, but instantly made the best preparations for defending himself that still remained in his power. Yet he proceeded to these duties with a heart full of dismay. Aben Abed was much addicted to the consultation of the stars; he believed that the moment announced by them at his birth had now arrived, and he thought he perceived the approach to its fulfilment of that prophecy wherein it had been declared to his father "that his dynasty should be destroyed by a certain people who should come forth from an island which was yet not their proper dwelling." Other circumstances of his domestic life brought increased discouragement to the already dejected king: and all now appeared to him to be of mournful augury. He was afflicted, for example, among other things, by having heard in a dream one of his sons repeat the following words in very elegant verses:

Time was when favouring Fortune bore our name
Through the wide world, and from her shining car
Published the fame of our immortal deeds—
But now she holds her peace, or doth but breathe
In bitter sighs and tears that flow unceasing.

Day passes, and the night—and so do pass
The world's most dear delights: frail as a dream
Is all the greatness of these lower realms.
And now, as fly the timid flocks of air,
When comes the falcon sweeping o'er the waste,
So fly the warriors once thy pride and strength.—
They hide them from the storm that Thou must bide.

Aben Abed sallied forth against the Almoravides with his cavalry; and such were his valour and practised dexterity in arms that he maintained himself, despite their overwhelming numbers, and fought with varying fortunes in several skirmishes, but he carefully avoided coming to a regular engagement. In the hope of dividing the attention of the king, Syr Ben Bekir sent one of his generals, Bati Ben Ismail, namely, with a body of men to besiege Jaen; and this was done with so much zeal and good effect that the city was compelled to surrender, but on tolerably favourable con-

ditions: it was then immediately occupied by the Almoravides. Syr Ben Bekir despatched an account of that victory to Juzef Ben Taxfin, who rejoiced greatly therein, and sent orders to his general in reply, commanding him not to desist from the attack on Aben Abed, King of Seville, until he had despoiled that sovereign of all he possessed; nay, he enjoined Syr Ben Bekir not to leave him one town of all the many that formed his kingdom.

The general Bati Ben Ismail was then directed to join his force to that of Carur El Lamtuni, who was carrying the war into the Comarcas of Cordova, and had indeed begun to lay close siege to the city itself; but in a sally made by the people of Cordova, led on by Naser Alfetah, son of Aben Abed, King of Seville, they made a frightful slaughter among the Almoravides, which rendered it needful that the division under Carur El Lamtuni's command should be reinforced. On the arrival of the new troops, led by Bati Ben Ismail, the Almoravides renewed their assaults with a fury which compelled the inhabitants to accept conditions of surrender, when, having first received an assurance of security for their lives and possessions, they opened their gates, and on Wednesday, the 3rd day of the moon Safer, in the year 484, the troops of Juzef Aben Taxfin made good their entrance. They had not well done so, before Carur El Lamtuni caused the son of Aben Abed, Abu Naser Alfetah, called likewise Almamun, to be traitorously deprived of life.

At the same period, the Almoravides, under the command of Syr Ben Bekir, took possession of Vaeza,* Ubeda, Castro-Alvelad, Almodavar, Assachira, and Zacura. The division which had been sent to Ronda made itself master of that city also, but not until after a noble and most obstinate resistance had been made by Yezid Radillah, the youngest son of Aben Abed. That prince was in like manner put to death by the ferocious Carur El Lamtuui, who had him in guard, and who pierced the heart of the noble youth with his own lance, in violation of all justice as well as of the compact but just before concluded.

In the course of a few months the barbarous command of

* Vaeza or Baeza; sometimes called also Vaza.

Juzef Aben Taxfin had been but too implicitly obeyed, and of all the cities of his kingdom there remained to Aben Abed only Seville and Carmona,—both well defended.

The general Bati Ben Ismail remained in Cordova until he had been enabled to garrison the city securely, and had occupied all the fortresses of the Comarca; he likewise despatched one of the Lamtuna generals with a body of a thousand horse to Calatrava, one of the strongest fortresses in the possession of the Moslemah: and this he did because there had come reports of the approach of the King Don Alfonso, who was said to be advancing to the aid and defence of Aben Abed, King of Seville,

On his part Syr Ben Bekir had also taken measures for the defence of the frontier, and that done he sat down before Carmona, which he besieged with an ardour not to be described, and ultimately took by storm, entering the city sword in hand at nightfall, on Saturday, the 17th day of Rebie Primera, in the year 483.

That strong city being lost, Aben Abed suffered all hope to sink from his heart, and he sent to entreat succour from the King of the Christians, Alfonso, to whom he offered certain of his towns in return for the help required. Then Alfonso, with a singular generosity, forgetting all past injuries and thinking only of the old friendship that had once existed between himself and the King of Seville, sent his general, the Conde Gumis, to his aid, with twenty thousand cavalry and forty thousand infantry, although Aben Abed had not fully declared to him the miserable condition of his affairs, nor exposed all the distress in which he found himself.

The powerful army of the Christians next entered the territory of Cordova, at that time in the power of the Almoravides, whose towns they burnt and whose lands they devastated in their progress. Against them there then went forth, by order of Syr Ben Abi Bekir, the general Ibrahim Ben Ismail, of Lamtuna, one of the bravest of the Almoravide leaders. His command consisted of ten thousand horse, of the Zencta, Gomara, and Masumuda Cabilas, a carefully chosen body of men; and with these marched a strong division of infantry, all people well inured to battle and familiar with the horrors of warfare. These two hosts then

met, and a very obstinate combat ensued, in which the Christians were defeated and fled the field, since in no other manner could they save themselves from death; but this they did not consent to do until they had inflicted a very heavy loss on the Almoravides.

Syr Ben Bekir now laid siege to the city of Seville, and that place was defended by its King Aben Abed with the utmost constancy and valour, he making frequent sallies in person, and taking part in many skirmishes and surprises. But the prowess and the exploits of the Almoravides were such and so many that the inhabitants at length required their king to enter into negociations for surrender, seeing that it was not possible for the city to hold out against the bravery and boldness of so determined and powerful an enemy. And Aben Abed himself, having now learned the ill success of his Christian auxiliaries, had lost all hope, wherefore, although with grief of heart, he agreed to surrender the city, under the faith of King Juzef's protection, and after receiving promise of security for life and goods for all the inhabitants of the same, as well as for himself, his sons, his daughters, his wives, and the servants of his household, all this being granted by the General, Syr Ben Bekir, in the name of his Lord the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin. The Almoravides then took possession of Seville, an event which happened on Sunday, the 22nd* day of the moon Regeb, in the year 484.

The general of the Almoravides instantly constituted Aben Abed prisoner, and placing him under a strong guard, made preparations for sending that sovereign, with his whole family, to Africa. The sons now remaining to him were Abu Husein Obeidallah Arraxid, Abu Becar Abdallah Almoated, Abu Zuleyman Arabie, called Tag-dola, and Abu Hasim Almoali Zeino-dola. Aben Aben was also accompanied by the wives of his sons, by his daughters, and by the female slaves of his harem. Among the latter was one who for her beauty and discretion was more especially beloved by the king—Otamida, namely, the mother of his son Arabie, and who was also called Saida Cubra (there is a memorial respecting her on the inscription which was

* Other writers say the 19th.—*Condé.*

engraved on a mosque in the year 478), and Romaika; the last-mentioned name being given to her because she had been purchased by Aben Abed from Romaik Ben Hegiag.

All this illustrious family was now sent into Africa, and the lamentations that were made at their embarkation are not to be told; tears marked their separation from their beautiful city, and heavy sighs were heard to escape their hearts as they beheld the towers of their radiant palaces disappearing from their sight,—all their grandeur vanishing at the same moment as doth the fabric of a dream. Yet this is the manner of the world, which doth but give that it may take away, which sweetens only to make the future more bitter, which illustrates only more effectually to darken, and whose purest gifts never fail to exhibit some trace of evil.

The exiles arrived at Cebta, and Juzef Ben Taxfin, without any consideration for the royal majesty of the King of Seville and his sons, sent them all prisoners to the city of Agmat. On the way thither, an Alarabe, called Abul Hassan Hasuri, composed certain verses in praise of Aben Abed; and although they were by no means to be compared with those which he had been wont to receive from his own poet, Aben Zeidun, yet the captive monarch is said to have presented to his eulogist six-and-thirty doubloons of gold, which were all that he had with him at the moment, and were indeed to prove the last reward that he was ever to confer in this life.

When the fallen monarch arrived at Medina Agmat, the Almoravides shut him up in a tower, where he lived during four years in extreme poverty and destitution: he was surrounded by his daughters, who waited upon and served him with the utmost affection: but the sight of his children in that deplorable condition deprived the unfortunate monarch of the consolation he might otherwise have derived from their filial attachment, which was thus rendered but another source of pain and sorrow to his heart.

Aben Abed was furthermore to be shortly afterwards afflicted by the death of his beloved Saida Cubra: unable to endure the misfortunes, the poverty and depression of her consort, she expired no long time after the arrival of the hapless family at Agmat. Aben Lebana relates that some

of the people of Aben Abed found means to penetrate to his prison on the occasion of the Easter ceremonies, and to offer him the good wishes customary at that period: they there found their late magnificent sovereign with his daughters around him, all clothed in worn-out and faded vestments, with other indications of the most complete destitution. Yet the grieved visitors declared that the royal majesty of their race was still visible in the countenances of the princes, and beneath those poor garments could still be discovered the delicacy and beauty of their forms, insomuch that they reminded the beholder of the sun when partially eclipsed, or veiled in clouds that diminish his splendour, but do not wholly conceal his perfection. So entirely had the despoiled family been deprived of all, and so absolute was the poverty to which the King Juzef Aben Taxfin had permitted Aben Abed to be reduced, that the princesses, his daughters, were compelled to go barefoot, and gained their miserable sustenance by spinning.

Perceiving that the persons who were witnesses to these things were struck dumb with surprise and sorrow, Ben Abed repeated to them the verses of a mournful elegy which they could not hear without many tears and a profound grief. His sons were at the same time suffering similar privations: one of them, Abu Becar Abdallah Almoated, was assassinated during the Ramazan of that unhappy year 484; on that same day, and but a few hours before his murder, he had sent one of his little sons to his father with a copy of verses, wherein he sought to offer him consolation for the sufferings he endured.

Aben Abed himself survived to the year 488, when he also died. His reign had lasted three-and-twenty years, and the dynasty of his house was of seventy-three years duration, as he tells us himself in verses written after its fall; his love of poetry was indeed the best consolation and the sole recreation that he had preserved in his inexpressible sorrows. Some of the canzonets written by the fallen monarch are of such merit that they became the favourite songs of the people; they were committed to memory by his survivors, and were familiar in the mouths of all men.

CHAP. XXI.—OF THE TAKING OF ALMERIA BY THE ALMORAVIDES THEY OCCUPY VALENCIA—TREATY OF THE KING OF SARAGOSSA WITH JUZEF ABEN TAXFIN.

In the moon Xahan of the same year, 484, the Almoravides took possession of the city of Novua, and in the moon Xawal their General Davoud Aben Ayxa occupied Medina Hariza with his troops, when he sent an account of the advantages he had obtained and the conquests he had made to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin. The Alcayde Davoud Ben Ayxa was a brave and excellent man, as well as an able commander; he was prudent, just, and compassionate; no man had cause to complain of oppression at his hand; his moderation and courtesy were well known, and he made as many conquests by those qualities as by the force of arms.

At this time, Muhamad Ben Maun, King of Almeria, of the race of the Altegibies, known also as Almoatesim Moez-Dola, and as Awatic Dola, who had lived on terms of friendship with the King of Seville, Aben Abed, was attacked in his turn by the Almoravides; and although all the Ameers of Andalusia whom he had summoned to his aid, so soon as the treacherous proceedings of Syr Abi Bekir became known to him, were prepared to assemble in defence of his states, yet the Almoravides did not give them time to unite their forces for that purpose: a division of Juzef's army, conducted by Zacaria Ben Uscinis, fell upon the territory of Almeria without delay, and closely besieged the King Muhamad Ben Maun in his capital, which was also called Almeria. This prince was much beloved by his subjects for the justice and liberality of his government, and was esteemed as well as beloved by all the Ameers of Spain; for this cause the Almoravides were more especially eager to obtain early possession of his states, since they believed that all would unite for his defence, whether Christians or Moslemah. They besieged Medina Almeria therefore, with so much vigilance and vigour, that none could enter or leave the city whether by sea or land. Then Muhamad Ben Maun, perceiving that his power of maintaining the place was decreasing, and become hopeless of deliverance from an

enemy who was at the same time keeping all the kings of Spain in check, took these things so much to heart that his sorrow was more than he could bear, and he died of grief. The moment before Muhamad resigned his oppressed life, he advised his elder son, Ahmed Moez Dola, to take refuge in the East of Africa with the Aben Hamudes, if God should be pleased to liberate him, while still living, from the hands of his foes, and to ally himself with the sons of Hamud, if he were permitted to retain any power over his territories. The dying king spoke in similar terms to his younger son Iz Dola, but the latter did not follow the counsels of his father.

And so died the wise and virtuous King Almuatesim of Almeria, after a reign of much felicity, which had endured forty years. He had served under the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, at the battle of Zalacca, and had taken part with his troops at the seige of Alid, in the Çamarcas of Lorca; but these services were not suffered to impede the ruin of himself and his family.

The son of their lost king was immediately proclaimed by the people of Almeria, and all the more readily, as Ahmed Moez Dola* had already received the oath of allegiance, seeing that his father had long before associated him in the government, and declared him his successor. The day of his proclamation by the people was the 4th of the moon Rebie Postrera, in the year 484, which was that of his father's death.

But the reign of Abu Meruan Moez Dola did not endure more than a month from the day of Muhamad's death. At that time there came intelligence to Almeria of the occupation of Seville by the Almoravides, and of the deposition of Aben Abed; when the new sovereign of Almeria, losing what little hope he had previously entertained, and perceiving that it would not be possible for him to preserve his own capital in safety, provided himself secretly with a ship, in which he resolved to escape from the doomed city: meanwhile he began to enter into negociations for the surrender thereof.

The question of surrender having once been entertained,

* In other passages of these chronicles Ahmed is called Obeidallah Moezdala Abu Meruan.—*Condé.*

the care of those who watched the city became somewhat relaxed, and in the dead of night the king fled from its walls with his family and treasures, directing his steps to the East of Africa, as his father had recommended, and abandoning Almeria, with its dependencies, to the conquering Almoravides. His flight, according to some authors, was before the close of Ramazan; according to others that event took place on the 25th of the moon Xaban, in the year 484.

Abu Meruan took with him his brother Rafel Dola, as he did also the wives and children of that prince. The brothers found shelter with the Lord of Bejaya, and they lived in that city as vassals and dependents of Almanzor Ben Anasir Ben Alanas Ben Hamedi Ben Balker Ben Zeiri Ben Menad Zanhagi, who shortly afterwards conferred on Abu Meruan the government of Tunis in the West. His brother Rafel Dola was subsequently favoured and protected by the Wali of Telencen El Mezdeli, and at that place Rafel Dolah, who was much addicted to the study of letters, resided, happily busied with that peaceful occupation until the day of his death, which took place, as we are informed by the Andalusian historians, Amru Otman of Cordova, Zacarias of Saragossa, and Alcodai of Valencia, in the year 539.

On the day after that which saw the son of the broken-hearted Muhamad departing from the city of his inheritance, that place surrendered to the Almoravides, and the general of Juzef Aben Taxfin, Davoud Aben Ayxa, took possession of the same with his troops. He then sent companies of soldiers to occupy the dependencies of Almeria, and laid seige to Montuxar, which he soon reduced, as he had done the other towns of the kingdom. Abed Ayxa then despatched messengers to the King Juzef, giving him the welcome intelligence that the Almoravides had now, within a year and a half, found means to make themselves masters of five kingdoms of Andalusia: those namely which had belonged to Aben Habus, to Aben Abed, to Abu Alhas Maun, to Aben Abdelaziz, and to Abdallah Ben Becar, Lord of Jaen, Oyla, and Ecija.

In the following year, 485, the King of the Moslemah commanded his general Davoud Ben Ayxa to march upon

Denia; which command he executed accordingly, and occupied the city, as he did that of Xativa. Both these towns had been held by Aben Moncad, and that Ameer, together with Abu Mernan Huzeil Aben Razin, of Murbiter and Valencia, had allied himself with the Christians, and with their general, Ruderic El Cambiter,* thinking to defend themselves against the Almoravides by his aid; but the general Devoud Aben Ayxa occupied all those places with little difficulty and without much shedding of blood. The state of Abed Razid remained a separate dependence, and the government was given in perpetual tenancy to Yahye Abdelmelic Abu Meruan, who was its lord by right of inheritance; but this happened on account of the antiquity of his family's possession, and also because of their ancient alliances with the Aben Hudes of Saragossa. The son of Abdelmelic likewise became governor of the state, having succeeded his father Yahye therein.

These things done, Davoud Abu Ayxa departed to Secura, which city he also took, and then passing on with his army he laid siege to Valencia. That place was defended by the King Yahye Ben Dylnoun, assisted by the Christians, who were his allies or rather his lords. During a sally, which terminated in a sanguinary and obstinate engagement, Yahye Ben Dylnoun was mortally wounded and died that same day, when he was succeeded in the kingdom and the defence of the city by Alcadir Yahye Ben Dylnoun, who being a wise and valiant general, disputed the entrance of the foe in many a well-fought battle and ingenious surprise, defending the place with equal courage and ability.

The Christians, perceiving that it was impossible to maintain themselves in Valencia, retired from the city; but Alcadir, assisted by the brave general Aben Tahir, Lord of Tadmir, still continued to defend the walls, which he abandoned only with his life.

Much time and rivers of blood had now been expended, and more would have been lavished in the same cause had not the Cadi of Valencia, Ahmed Ben Gehaf Almaferi, consented to form a compact with the enemy, in pursuance of which he caused the gates to be thrown open, and the

* The Cid Campeador.

Almoravides entered sword in hand. They made a cruel slaughter among the people who still remained faithful to Alcadir, and that prince himself perished with many other noble cavaliers, all fighting with the bravery of lions.

To the Cadi Ahmed Ben Gehaf there was given as the reward of his service the government of the place he had betrayed, and from being its Cadilcoda he rose to be the Wali of that important city. But how just is the Divine Providence! How inflexible is that law which ensures the accomplishment of its eternal decrees! This we shall more clearly set forth hereafter, when we come to relate the death of the treacherous Cadi.

The General Davoud Aben Ayxa wrote an account of his conquest to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Ben Taxfin, who replied by commanding him to continue his aggressions until he had subjugated all Spain.

Now the King Abu Giaffar of Saragossa, of the illustrious race of Aben Hud, was all this time maintaining the whole eastern border of Spain with the noble uprightness and heroic valour which formed the distinctions of his character. Guadir Higiara, Medina Celi, Helga, Daroca, Calatayub, Huesca, Tudila, Barbasta, Lerida, and Fraga, were all in his command; and he was equally powerful on the sea which lies to the south of the Pyrenees, sending his ships to Alexandria and the coast of Africa, all richly laden with the products of Spain; and these returning, brought him the merchandize of Syria and of other provinces situate towards the east. He was the most wealthy of all the kings of Spain, and being very liberal, moreover, as well as just and humane, he was so much beloved by his people, that he might be said to hold their hearts in his hand.

For this cause, Juzef Ben Taxfin did not venture to attack the King of Saragossa, nor had he declared war against his states; but the prudent Abu Giaffar, fearing to see the King of the Moslemah become his enemy, and perceiving the victories which he had obtained over the other Ameers, thought it best to yield to the necessities of the time, and prepare for the storm by which he was threatened. He therefore wrote a letter to King Juzef, desiring his alliance and a treaty of defence against the Christians: this letter he sent by the hands of his own son, Ima Dolah Abu

Meruan Abdelmelic, charging that prince at the same time with very precious gifts* for the Ameer of the Moslemah, to whom, among other things, he wrote as follows:—

"My states are the wall which stands between thyself and the enemy of our Law; this wall is the shelter and defence of the Moslemah: nor have my forefathers ceased to guard these frontiers from the first moment of their reign in the land, resolved that the Infidel should not enter the other provinces of Spain by our borders. The assurance of thy friendship will be a satisfaction to me, and thou mayst rely upon the sincerity of my alliance. My son Abdelmelic will declare to thee the intentions of our heart, and our earnest wishes for the defence and propagation of Islam."

To that letter Juzef Aben Taxfin replied in the following words:—

"From the King of the Moslemah and Protector of the Faith, Juzef Aben Taxfin, to the Confident in God, Ahmed Abu Giafar Aben Hud, whose potency may God the Omnipotent perpetuate and increase.

"From our court of Morocco—may God have it in his keeping—whither thy letter hath arrived, giving clear evidence of the nobility and valour of thy forefathers.

"We give thanks to God and the perfection of praise, imploring him to direct and guide us in the path of uprightness, and to lead our thoughts to salutary ends. We pray to God for our lord Muhamad his servant, with whom, may the Divine grace, which exalts to perfection, be ever abundant.

"Respecting the things which we have to say to thee—to whom may God add strength—and in regard to thy sublime generosity, know that in us there is nothing less than a sincere friendship for thee, proceeding entirely from our natural disposition which God hath given to us.

There hath also come to our presence the honour of

*. Abcodal has recorded that a portion of these presents consisted in fourteen Arrobas (three hundred and fifty pounds, Gen. 3) of silver in solid masses, each marked with the seal of his grandfather, Almutamen. He adds that Juzef received these gifts, and having coined them into Kirates, distributed them among the populace of Cordova on the day when he took possession of that city.—*Condé.*

greatness and the sublimity of understanding, which is Abu Meruan Abdelmelic, thy son by descent, but one also to us, for our love and good-will that we bear to him. May God increase in him His love to thee, since he is the light of thine eyes and the gladness of thy heart! With him have also arrived the two honourable Viziers Abu Lasba and Abu Amir, to whom may God accord the mercy of His holy fear, as well as to all your servants, to all and each of whom we have done honour according to his quality. They brought to us thy esteemed letter, which we have received with honour, and from this we have understood thy desires, as well as from the relation by words which thy son and Viziers have made to us with much discretion. We on our part have replied, in conformity with thy demands, and in communications with them have spoken to them once and again, so that they understand well what is contained in the convention of our reciprocal friendship and alliance, which shall be wholly directed towards the preservation of the greatness and sovereignty of the State, in so far as it shall be for the service of God. Farewell."

CHAP. XXII.—INCURSIONS OF THE INFIDEL ON THE LAND OF FRAGA. OF THE CONQUEST OF BADAJOZ BY THE ALMORAVIDES. UNION OF THE CID WITH THE MOORS AGAINST THE ALMORAVIDES, FROM WHOM THOSE ALLIES TAKE THE CITY OF VALENCIA. THE ALMORAVIDES OBTAIN POSSESSION OF THE BALEARIC ISLES.

ABU Giaffar was highly satisfied with the alliance thus formed; and in the year 486, the Almoravides did afford him effectual aid against the Christians, who had fallen like a whirlwind upon his territories, and assisted by those of Afranc with the Erdomanos, had made themselves masters of Fraga and Barbaster, devastating the fields, burning the towns, and plundering the flocks and herds of such of the inhabitants as they did not slay or carry into captivity. Nay, it hath been computed that in those incursions there perished no less than forty thousand persons, to say nothing of the many women, damsels, and children, who were carried away captives.

There then proceeded to the aid of the King Almustain Abu Giaffar of Saragossa, six thousand Almoravide cross-bowmen, with one thousand horse; when that force, having joined those of the King, made fearful reprisals on the Christians, and recovered the fortresses which had been taken by them. The Moslemah likewise retook Barbaster by force of arms, and having gained possession of the place, they left but few in life of all that they found therein. The city of Fraga was recovered in similar sort, the Infidels having been defeated in many well-contested and sanguinary conflicts. After these things, King Almustain returned to Saragossa, bringing five hundred Christian damsels in his train, with a thousand suits of armour taken from the Christian warriors, and many other spoils of great value, from which he sent rich gifts to the King of the Moslemah, and confirmed their reciprocal friendship anew.

While these things were passing in the eastern parts of Spain, Syr Aben Bekir, the most crafty of the Almoravide leaders, had taken his way with a powerful army towards the land of Algarve, to occupy the kingdom of Badajoz, which was then held by Omar Ben Muhamad Ben Alaftas, called Almetuakil Billah. Syr Ben Bekir took the cities of Algarve with but little difficulty, and made himself master of numerous fortresses; he also occupied Xelb and Evora; having effected which, he fixed his camp before Badajoz, that city being defended by the King Aben Alaftas himself, and maintained with much bravery.

But Fortune had turned her back on the Andalusian princes; there was a commonly accredited report then current, which found especial credence among the populace, to the effect that a prophecy had announced the irremediable destruction of the Kings of Spain, all of whom were predestined to be defeated and deposed by certain Ameers of Africa; and that persuasion being universally entertained by the people, was of so fatal an effect in those days, that the facility with which the Almoravides made themselves lords of Spain may be attributed in great measure to its effects. Nay, the very princes themselves were influenced by that belief, and thence it was that none of them did any thing truly effectual in defence of the country.

In a battle of terrible obstinacy fought between the troops

of Aben Alaftas and the Almoravides, the former were defeated, and two sons of the King, who had led the host, were taken prisoners: these were the Princes Alfadil and Alabas, who would not yield until, abandoned by their people and grievously wounded, they fell into the hands of the Almoravides. The inhabitants of Badajoz, discouraged by these continual losses, and intimidated by their last battle, then compelled the king to make conditions for the surrender of the place.

The general Syr Ben Bekir gave the king assurance of a safe departure from the city, with his children, his household, and all the treasures he yet retained; but after having possessed himself of Badajoz on that condition, and permitted the king to leave it, with his sons, his wives, and his slaves, he sent a troop of the Lamtuna cavalry in pursuit of the travellers, when those assassins, overtaking the unhappy family while still in the neighbourhood of the capital, inhumanly put the King Almetuakil to death with their lances, as they did the two wounded princes, Alfadil and Alabas. This deplorable tragedy was accomplished on a Saturday, which was the 7th day of the Moon Safer, in the year 487, and all was done by order of Juzef Aben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah.

The misfortunes of the family thus treacherously destroyed were sung by the most renowned poets of that time; and the elegy composed by the prefect of the palace, Abu Muhamad Abdelmegid Ben Abdun, was in the mouths of all men.

The King Almetuakil was a very learned man; he was the friend of all the wise and distinguished persons who frequented his court, with whom he passed his time, enjoying their society to a degree which caused him to forget all other affairs. His secretary, whom he always had with him in his palace, was that Vizier Abdelmegid already mentioned, an illustrious poet, who was the competitor of the renowned Cordovan, Abdallah Ben Zeidun, the friend and secretary of Aben Abed, King of Seville, whose canzonets were perfect as the songs of the Muses themselves, and formed the enchantment not only of Spain, but of Africa and the East. The Cadilcoda of that accomplished Court was the wise and learned Aben Mocama.

Of this unhappy sovereign, Almetuakil, the chronicle relates that, walking one day in his gardens with his Vizier, Abu Talib Ben Ganim, their conversation engaged them so deeply, that they forgot the lapse of time, and permitted the hour of supper to pass unheeded. But it chanced that this was a day in which certain noble Xeques had been invited to the table of the king, and when the night had come and he did not appear, those Xeques began to eat a certain part of that which had been prepared for the sovereign himself, but was then served to them. After a time, the Vizier reminded his lord of the hour, and his expecting guests, when a servant at the same moment arrived to say that a part of the meat had been already eaten. Almetuakil then sent the Vizier to make his excuses to the invited Xeques, while he took himself a tamarind leaf, on which he wrote two verses describing the cause of his delay, and adding that the delinquents, himself and his Vizier namely, were already punished, since the assembled guests had taken it upon them to decree the penalty and to execute their judgment.

A son of King Almetuakil, called Negm Dolah, who had been Wali of Santarem, was imprisoned at Almithema, by command of Juzef Aben Taxfin; and Aben Zarfon, Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova, relates that the Vizier and Alchatib, Abu Bekar Ben Alcabotorna, having gone to visit him some short time after the death of his father and brothers, could not restrain his tears as he beheld the miserable condition to which misfortune had reduced a prince whom he had seen lord of rich cities. When he saw the man who had dwelt only in magnificent Alcazars, and was ever surrounded by noble Xeques, who thought only of serving and doing him homage, now confined to a narrow prison and deprived of all that makes life desirable, he could not but reflect on the instability of human affairs. Such are the revolutions impressed by Fortune on her unstable and slippery wheel;—and so finished the kings of Andalusia. They were placed on their thrones by civil discords and intestine wars; they lived in the midst of perpetual contention, each labouring for his particular interest, to the destruction of the strength no less than the unity of Spain: they thus facilitated the aggrandizement of their enemies, and promoted the ruin of the entire country, while they thought only of establishing their

feeble and ephemeral sovereignties in the various provinces. Well, therefore, doth the Andalusian poet of that time exclaim:—

> "The contentions of thy people, O Land of Spain,
> Are calling the Ameer Amumenin to be thy chief."

And when, at length overpowered by the Christians, they perceived the evil consequences of their disunion, did they not seek to remedy the evil, by calling to their aid the Moors of Africa? These strangers defeated the Infidels without doubt, but they subsequently dethroned and subjugated the Ameers who had invited them, giving them a cruel death as their reward, or leading them into a degrading captivity more intolerable than death itself.

The assassination of King Alcadir of Valencia, with the occupation of that city by the Almoravides, through the medium of the Cadi Ahmed Ben Gehaf, was quickly made known through all Spain, as was also the fact that the traitor had been left Wali of the city as the price of his services to the murderers of his king.

Then the Lord of Santa Maria, de Aben Raxin, who was Abu Meruan Abdelmelik Ben Huzeil, a kinsman and ally of Alcadir Ben Alaftas, excited the people of Murbiter Xativa and Denia to avenge the death of that monarch, and they having also received cruel injuries at the hands of the Almoravides, joined with him, when all allied themselves to the general of the Christians, Ruderik, known as the Cambitur,* who boasted that he also was the friend and ally of the slaughtered King Alcadir, as well as of Abu Meruan and his kindred.

A well-appointed army of cavalry and infantry was then assembled, being composed of Christians and Moslemah alike; that force, led by the Cambitur, besieged the city of Valencia, which they pressed so closely that the Wali Aben Gehaf was compelled to surrender, seeing that he had no hope of receiving succours within the time that his necessities demanded them. The conditions made with the

* By other ancient writers the Cid is called king or tyrant of the Tagus.—*Condé.*

Wali were safety for himself, his family, and the citizens generally, who were not to be offended under any pretext, whether in their persons or goods: the Cambitur furthermore assured Gehaf that he should retain possession of his government.

Under these favourable conditions Aben Gehaf opened the gates of the city, and the Cambitor—may Allah confound him!—did not fail to enter at once therein, with all his people and allies.

These events took place in the moon of Giumada Primera, in the year 487, and the victorious general remained in Valencia with his troops both Christian and Moslemah, but without making his ultimate purpose manifest in any way. Ahmed Ben Gehaf also abode there in great confidence and security, being continued in his office of Cadilcoda, and being inflated with the pride of command; but when the year had accomplished its course, the Cambitor imprisoned Aben Gehaf at a time when he was least expecting such a circumstance, and with him all his family. This is said by some writers to have been done principally to the end that Gehaf might be forced to declare the place wherein he had concealed the treasures of the King Yahye Alcadir; and to obtain the truth as regarded those riches, there was no method left unattempted, whether entreaties, promises, menaces, deceptions, or tortures. A vast pile was at length prepared in the Great Square of Valencia, and this being kindled, the Cambitur commanded that Ahmed Ben Gehaf and all his family should be dragged thither, and cast into those flames, which were of so vast an extent that even those who stood at a considerable distance were burnt, and compelled to flight by that insufferable heat.

When the fallen governor, loaded with his chains, appeared with his children and family before that fearful pile, the assembled multitude, Moslemah as well as Christians, cried with a loud voice, entreating that the Cambitor would at least grant pardon to the innocent children and household; to which, after long resistance, he at length consented.

But for the Cadi the tyrant Cambitur had commanded that a great hole should be dug within a short distance of the blazing pile, and in this he was placed even to the

girdle. Then they surrounded the body of the doomed man with dry wood, and having kindled it there presently arose a great flame: as this approached him, the hapless Cadi covered his face, and exclaimed, "In the name of Allah, the Pitying, the Merciful!" As he uttered these words a vast mass of that fire fell upon him that very quickly burnt and consumed the body of Ahmed Gehaf, and his soul departed to the mercy of God. This took place on a Thursday, in the moon of Guimada Primera, in the year 488, and that was the same moon during which in the year preceding the accursed Cambitur had entered Valencia with the avengers of the King Alcadir Yahye Aben Dylnoun.*

The Vizier Aben Tahir soon departed from Valencia, and repaired to Murcia, taking with him the remains of King Alcadir, to give them honourable sepulture in that city, where the noble Aben Tahir himself died many years after,—in 508, that is to say, at which time he had attained the age of more than seventy years. That Vizier composed a copy of verses on the death of Alcadir Yahye, and in these he declared the vengeance that would inevitably overtake him who had been the cause of that untimely event.

Ahmed Gehaf having thus fearfully expired, the Cambitur took the needful measures for the government of the city of Valencia, in which, for the security of the Moslemah, his allies, he left a strong garrison of Christian troops. He then departed with the principal of the Moslemah generals, Abdelmelic Abu Meruan Aben Huzeil, namely, Lord of Santa Maria De Aben Razin; Abu Iza Ben Leboun Ben Abdelaziz, of Murbiter, having been left in Valencia as the Naib or Lieutenant of Abu Meruan.

At this time the Almoravide leader, Syr Ben Abi Bekir, despatched his ships to take possession of the islands lying in the sea to the East of Spain, when the troops which he sent in these barks occupied Iviça, Majorca, and Minorca, in the name of Juzef Aben Taxfin, King of the Moslemah,

* There is much reason for hoping that the frightful action here attributed to the Cid Campeador has but little foundation in truth: that the Cadi was put to death is admitted on all hands, but none of the authorities deny that he had well merited death, while many refuse their credence to the fearful details of that catastrophe given in the text.—TR.

without any resistance whatever on the part of the inhabitants. Those islands had been governed for the Kings of Valencia and Denia by the Beni Xuheid, illustrious Xeques of Murcia, who had ruled the same in peace and justice from the year 440; at which period the government passed into their hands from those of the Wali Ahmed Ben Basich Abu Alabas, secretary to the Ameer of Denia, Abu Geix Mugehid Ben Abdallah Alameri. But since they knew well that nearly all Spain was now in the power of King Juzef, the rulers of the islands took the oath of obedience to his sovereignty with good will, placing themselves under his faith and protection.

Now it chanced in the year 493, that Obeidallah, the son-in-law of Abu Meruan, Lord of Santa Maria, and who had raised himself to the soveveignty of Adcun, came into the Comarcas of Santa Maria, with Abu Iza Ben Leboun, Lord of Murbiter, and while the last-named chief was occupied with an incursion on the surrounding territory, Obeidallah, taking a son of his own in his company, repaired with certain of his followers to visit Abu Meruan, his father-in-law. But he made such extraordinary demands on Abu Meruan —that he should name him successor to his states, namely, that he should instantly supply him with money and troops, and agree to other requirements of equal importance—that Abu Meruan becoming much displeased by his boldness, reproved him with great asperity. A warm discussion then ensued, and at length Obeidallah and his son drew their swords on Abu Meruan, who defended himself against them as he best could. The noise of that encounter brought into the hall a daughter of Abu Meruan, who was the promised bride of Obeidallah, and that princess seeing the Xeques in deadly combat with her father, called aloud for help, when the servants and people of Meruan hurried to the place. Beholding their master thus attacked they instantly fell on his assailants with their daggers, and would soon have cut them down had not Abu Meruan himself restrained their fury.

But it was only for a moment that he did so; when his daughter had left the hall, he commanded his people to hew off the hands and feet of Obeidallah, to tear out his eyes, and to impale him, thus mutilated, on a stake, where

he was left to die, while his son, having his feet also cut off, was then thrown into a dungeon. In all this the commands of Abu Meruan were obeyed without hesitation.

The King Abu Meruan was much beloved by his subjects, since he treated them with infinite consideration, and ruled them justly. In his house the fires of hospitality were burning day and night, and he was the never-failing protector of all who were in need. His friendship and alliance with the King of Saragossa and with El Cambitor, the general of the Christians, enabled him to maintain his independence, which was besides assured by his good government and by the sound policy that he pursued.

The expedition to the islands had just been happily completed, when Syr Ben Abi Bekir received intelligence to the effect that Valencia had been taken by the Christians, an event which was made known to him by the governor of Almeria, a son of that Ahmed Aben Gehaf whom the Cambitor had burnt to death, as hath been related. Hearing this, Syr Ben Bekir gathered all his force, and sent a vast army, composed of Moors from Lamtuna and Masamuda, with a large body of cross-bowmen, to the attack and siege of that place, whither he himself repaired with all speed.

Then the Christians, with the Moslemah their allies, perceiving that they could not maintain the city against so great a force, and having no hope of succours, abandoned the place, but not until after they had endured a long siege, during which there were fought many sanguinary skirmishes and obstinate battles. The persistence of the Almoravides nevertheless prevailed in the end, and God restored it happily to Islam. That event occurred in the moon of Regib, in the year 495; and when the restitution of the place became known, many of the nobles and learned men who had retired on the entrance of the Christians to Syria, Mureia, and Jaen, returned to Valencia and resumed their abode within the walls of that city. Among these persons was Muhamad Aben Bahr, Ben Aasi Alansari, a native of Siria, and a Xeque in his own land, who had fled to Jaen, and had remained there nearly seven years, devoting himself to the study of letters, in company with Abu Hegag Alkefiz and Meruan Aben Zerag. Having returned thither, as we have said, in the year that Valencia was restored to Islam,

Aben Bahr became Almocri, or reader, in the Great Mosque of that city.

Muhamad Aben Bahr wrote a work on the Variations of the Alcoran, in which he displayed much critical acumen; ultimately he retired to his native place of Siria, where he died in the year 547. His departure took place at the hour of dawn, and on a Sunday, which was the 6th of the moon Xawal. He was buried in the Makbura of Beni Zenoun, by the people of that place, and the prayer was made for him by his brother Abu Muhamad. Aben Bahr was born in the year 470.

In the year 496 died Abdelmelik Abu Meruan, Lord of Aben Razia: he was succeeded by his son, Yahye Ben Abdelmelik, but as a dependant on the city of Valencia.

CHAP. XXIII.—Juzef aben taxfin revisits the land of spain. oath of allegiance taken to his son aly. return of juzef to africa, and his death in that country.

The affairs of Spain having been thus successfully brought to an issue by his generals Davoud Ben Aixa and Syr Abu Bekir, Juzef Aben Taxfin repaired to that country in the year 496 to visit his new states. On that occasion there passed the sea in his company two of his sons, the elder of whom was called Abu Tair Temim, and the younger Abul Hassan Aly; but the latter, although inferior to his brother in age, was more than his equal in force of mind and strength of character. It was of him that an Andalusian poet of that time wrote the following lines:—

> Aly, though counting last in years,
> Yet by his valour first appears,
> As the gemmed ring most dearly graced
> Is on the smallest finger placed.

With these his sons, the Ameer of the Moslemah passed through all the provinces of Spain. They were delighted beyond measure as they became aware of the beauties and advantages of the country, and Juzef compared the whole land to an eagle, saying that the head was Toledo, the

beak, Alcala de Raya;* the breast, Jaen; the claws, Granada; the right wing, Algarvia; and the left, Axarkia: meaning by all this to intimate the degree of importance attached to the respective portions, and that which was more particularly the part of each, in the government and defence of the whole state.

Having completed his tour of inspection, the king convoked his Xeques with the principal generals of the Almoravides, and in that council he decided to declare his son Aly, who was then in Cordova, the future successor to his states, commanding that all should swear obedience to him and acknowledge him for their lord when his own days should have come to their end. The oath of allegiance was taken accordingly with much solemnity, and amidst a large concourse of nobles and cavaliers, both of Spain and Africa,† the king commanding his Vizier, Abu Ben Abdelgafir, to write the letter which contained the compact of succession,—a document which was conceived in the following terms:—

"Pact of the future succession and partition in the government of the empire:—Praises be to God! who granteth mercy to such as serve Him in their inheritances and successions, who hath created kings to be heads of states for the preservation of peace and concord among the people.

"As the Ameer of the Moslemah, Nasredin Abu Jacub Juzef Aben Taxfin, knows and acknowledges that God hath made him the chief guardian and defender of so many nations, to the end that he may serve Himself and the Faithful; so, fearing lest the day called to-morrow may be that on which it shall please God to demand from him an account of that which He hath confided to him, and given him in charge,

* Or, as others have it, Calatrava.—*Condé.*

† Alcodai relates that the Hagib Amad-Dolah Abu Meruan Abdelmelic, a grandson of Almuctadir Billah, King of Saragossa, came to this ceremony among other great chiefs, having been sent thither by his father with a present of singular rarity and value, whereupon Juzef commanded that Kirates of gold should be made of the same, and distributed those coins among the people of Cordova on the day of the Festival of the Hidnihar.—*Condé.*

and to the intent that he may not then be found to have neglected the duty of leaving in his place one who shall protect the people as their king, and shall govern them in peace and justice; since, also, it is certainly known that God commands to make a testament and the disposition of matters involving less important consequences,—and how much more, then, must this obligation be conformable to His divine will in affairs so grave and of so much consideration as that of governing the nations, which is one on the success whereof depends the general welfare, as well of the rich as the poor;—so now the King of the Moslemah, considering that this command toucheth him in particular, inasmuch as that God hath placed beneath his care the government of many peoples,—as in things of this world, so in those pertaining to the Law,—upholding all by the forces of both ends of his lance, and by the temper and keenness of the edge of his sword;—after having well meditated on these things, the King hath found that his younger son, Abul Hassan Aly, is a youth well disposed for great and high things; he is therefore the better prepared to bear upon his shoulders the weight of the administration of a kingdom; wherefore the King of the Moslemah hath selected and appointed, called, proclaimed, and elevated him to the majesty and dignity of the throne, and to the government of the empire, having previously taken counsel of wise and prudent men from all parts—those near as well as those distant; when all, in common accord with the noble Xeques and cavaliers of the kingdom, have freely manifested and made known that they accept and are well satisfied with the succession of Prince Aly here declared, seeing that his own father is contented and satisfied therewith. Thus they receive the youth for their Ameer because the King his father hath chosen and selected him to be Ameer, esteeming him to be worthy of that dignity, and well suited to receive the elevation of the royal majesty."

Then the Prince Aly was called to the presence of his father and the council, when the king proposed to him the conditions on which he had been named the successor and heir of his dominions, to which the Prince replied, that he accepted and was highly content with the same, resolving

on his part to fulfil the duties which they involved. The lot of the Istihara was then cast, invocations being made to Allah, with entreaties for His favour and aid to render all secure, since all power and prosperity are in His hand.

After these things the King Juzef uttered a solemn exhortation to his son, impressing upon his mind such truths as he deemed convenient and best calculated to assist him in the accomplishment of his great duties, the prince repeating his promises and expressing his desire to serve God and fulfil the intentions of his father.

Next the Vizier Alcatib produced a document to certify that all then present were content with that succession, and confirmed their acceptance thereof; those Xeques who were absent doing the same by their procurators. Furthermore was then added that the prince, the sworn successor to the empire, had heard and understood the conditions of his succession, and that he had accepted them; all which the Vizier Alcatib signed with his name. That oath of allegiance was sworn in the moon Dylhagia of the year 496.

Now the conditions and commandments which King Juzef had proposed and laid upon his son in relation to the government of the empire, were on this wise: the Alcaidias and governments of provinces, cities, and fortresses, were to be confided thenceforward and for ever to the Almoravides of the tribe of Lamtuna; but the guardianship of the frontiers and the war against the Christians were to be left to the Moslemah of Andalusia, seeing that they were more experienced and practised in the warfare with those Infidels,—their mode of combat, their stratagems and incursions. Juzef recommended his son to reward those who should distinguish themselves while fighting in his service, with presents of arms and horses, to which vestments and money were to be added on certain occasions. He advised him to maintain a force of seventeen thousand Almoravide cavalry in the Spanish division of the empire, those troops to be distributed to various parts then fixed and determined on by the King of the Moslemah himself, who prescribed the proportions also, and these were: seven thousand to Seville, one thousand to Cordova, three thousand to Granada, and four thousand to the Axarkia; the remaining two thousand

were to be placed on the frontiers in such fortresses as were nearest to the Christian foes.*

These matters being all arranged, the King of the Moslemah departed from Spain and crossed the sea to Ceuta. In his passage through Lucena, King Juzef intimated to the Jews of that city that they were now to become Moslemah, since a compact had been found in an ancient book, then at Cordova, whereby the Jews living in the time of the Prophet had offered to become Moslemah at the end of five hundred years, if within that time the Messiah whom they had so long awaited (and of whom it was affirmed in their Tura, that he was to be of their nation, founding a doctrine and law which were to endure to the end of time) had not been born to them within that period.

This engagement having thus been brought to their recollection,—and many were found to affirm that it had been truly made,—the Jews appealed to King Juzef for indulgence; whereupon they were referred to his Vizier and Cadi, Abdallah Ben Aly, with whom they compounded the matter, obtaining a redemption from present interference respecting that engagement, on paying to the treasury a vast amount of money in doubloons of gold.

Having embarked and happily sailed to Ceuta, the King of the Moslemah lived there in retirement, taking no part in the affairs of the kingdom, seeing that no long time after his arrival there he began to feel symptoms of decay, for he was indeed now become very old. In the year 498, his sickness still continuing, he was removed to Morocco; but the weakness and suffering which then afflicted him increased daily, until his strength having wholly departed, he remained without the power of motion, not being able to lift a limb. And so he died—may God receive him to His mercy!—at the close of the moon Muharram, and soon after the commencement of the year 500. Juzef Aben Taxfin had then lived one hundred years, and counting from the time when his cousin Abu Bekir had made him his Naib, he had

* According to Alcodai, the pay of these troops was also regulated; five crowns per months namely, to each cavalier, with his rations and clothing.—*Condé.*

reigned about forty years; but from the time when he entered Medina Fez, thirty-eight. His reign in Andalusia was seventeen years, reckoned from the day when he took the kingdom of Granada from its previous master, King Abdallah Ben Balkin, to the day of his death.*

When the King of the Moslemah perceived that he was about to die, he called his son, the Prince Aly Ben Juzef, and, among other commands, imposed on him that of never making war without necessity, recommending him, furthermore, to avoid having a war of any kind with the tribes dwelling in the mountains of Daren, and with that of Masamuda, inhabiting the country beyond those mountains, towards Al Kibla.† He advised him, moreover, to maintain a constant friendship with the race of the Beni Hud, who were Kings of the Axarkia‡ of Spain, seeing that those monarchs served as a wall which restrained the Christians, and were the protectors and defenders of the Moslemah of Andalusia. He bade the Prince be careful to hold the Moslemah of Spain in honour, more particularly those of Cordova, recommending him to overlook such faults as were not of vital importance, and forgive such as might offend him.

Of this King, Juzef Ben Taxfin, it is affirmed that he never inflicted the penalty of death, his heaviest punishment being perpetual imprisonment or banishment from the kingdom. He was buried at Morocco, within the Alcazar itself; his two sons, Abu Tair Temim and Abul Hassan Aly, being present at the funeral, with many other Xeques, who were his friends or kinsmen of the tribes of Lamtuna and Zanhaga. The chroniclers tell us that he made protestation of his faith and the desire he entertained for the propagation of the Law even at the hour of his death, and Muhamad Ben Halif, in his Beian Wadeh, or "The Luminous Declaration," describes the Moslemah, his subjects, as able to find no consolation for his departure but in that fixed choice of a successor which he had made of his son Aly.

When King Juzef, accompanied by thirteen Ameers of Andalusia, had gained the victory of Zalacca, in which he

* Yahye, counting from the time when Juzef received the lieutenancy of Almagreb, and when his cousin Aben Omar departed to the desert, calls the length of his reign thirty-four years.—*Condé.*

† The South. ‡ The East.

defeated the King of the Christians, Don Alfonso, he had commanded that the impress of the coins previously current should be changed, and caused the following inscription to be placed on those of gold: "There is no God but Allah. Mahomet is the ambassador of Allah. The Prince of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin." Around the piece were engraved these words: "He who follows another Law than that of Islam, his faith shall not be accepted, and at the last day he shall be numbered with the unhappy." The reverse bore the inscription that follows: "The Ameer Abdallah, Prince of the Faithful Abasi." Around the piece on that side were the place and date of its coinage.

CHAP. XXIV.—ALY BEN JUZEF COMMENCES HIS REIGN. REPAIRS TWICE TO SPAIN. BATTLE OF UKLIS, IN WHICH THE INFANT DON SANCHO IS SLAIN.

ALY, the son of Juzef, was proclaimed king in Morocco immediately on the death of his father. He was called Abu Hassan, and the mother that bore him was a Christian, named Comaica. The place of his birth, which occurred in the year 477, was Ceuta. He was of fair complexion and clear colour; had beautiful eyes, a handsome beard, and glossy black hair; his nose was well-proportioned, he had a graceful mouth, was of middle height, and had a good constitution. His proclamation at Morocco took place in the moon of Muharram, in the year 500.

Aly Ben Juzef was at that time in the twenty third year of his age; he was already the father of three sons, Texfin* El Wali, who succeeded him in the kingdom, Abu Becar, and Syr Ben Aly. The secretary of the new king was Abu Muhamad Ben Abed, one of the sons of Aben Abed, King of Seville. The people of Aly Ben Juzef called him Ameer Amuminin; he reigned over all the lands of Almagreb, from Medina Beghaya to the extremity of Velad Sûs Alaksa, and his rule extended over the whole Alkibla, from

* Subsequently called Texfin, Taxfin, and Taxifin.

Sigilmesa to the Mountains of Gold in Velad Saedan. Aly Ben Juzef was besides lord of almost all Spain, from the east to the west, as well as of the islands of the Syrian Sea, Ivica, Majorca, and Minorca. The Chotba was made for him in more than three hundred thousand Alminbares: at a word, he was the greatest and most powerful monarch of that time, as well as of his family. He was just and learned, a brave warrior, and an excellent defender and protector of his frontiers, being careful to follow the footsteps of his illustrious father in all things. At a later period of his life he had other sons in addition to those above mentioned: these were Abu Afs and Omar, called the elder, with Temim-Ibrahim, who made the pilgrimage to Mecca; Ishac, who was slain from motives of revenge by his nephew, the son of his brother Ibrahim; Abu Ham; Davoud; Omar, called the younger, Musdeli and Othman, who was the youngest of all. This last-named prince was born of a Christian mother, who was called for her beauty Fadelhusun.

The Viziers who served this sovereign were, in the earlier part of his reign, Otman Ben Omar, and at the close thereof Ishac Ben Otman. When the last-mentioned Vizier entered the service of the King Aly Ben Juzef, he was but eighteen years old, yet his force of character and prudence were such, that even at his then tender age he was the admiration of all the old men and sages of the court; for this it was that Aly Ben Juzef made him his Vizier, an office which he occupied much to the satisfaction of his sovereign, nor was any complaint made of him by the people, while his administration was ever to the notable advantage of the common weal and the promotion of justice. The wisdom and natural endowments of Ishac Ben Otman were in fact such that he seemed to have the power of penetrating all hearts, and was able to comprehend all things, whether in the past, the present, or the future.

With these ministers, and guided by his own prudence and love of justice, Aly Ben Juzef began to arrange the affairs of his government very successfully; taking counsel, moreover, from the learned persons who thronged his court, as well as from men well experienced in affairs both of peace and war: to these and such alone it was that he gave the principal employments and offices of his kingdom.

Aly Ben Juzef was of an exceedingly generous disposition, and very compassionate to the poor. He was of a grave and imposing presence, insomuch that he was reverenced by all who beheld him; while he was beloved for his virtues as well as dreaded for his power. His elder brother, Abu Tahir Temim, swore allegiance to him without any hesitation, as did the other great lords of his kingdom. Aly Ben Juzef was the first Moslemah sovereign who accepted the service of Christians in his affairs: he employed them as administrators of the revenue and receivers of imposts. There were also many Christian cavaliers entertained at his court, yet that did not prevent him from making relentless war on the Christians, or from waging it in his own person. Witness of his zeal for Islam may be found in the Comarcas of Toledo and of Talavera, which were desolated and destroyed by the victorious arms of Aly Ben Juzef, to which intent that monarch passed four times from Africa into Andalusia, as we shall see hereafter.

The chronicles relate that immediately on the death of his father being announced to Aly, and when he had wrapped the body in its funeral weeds, he presented himself to his Xeques, leading his elder brother Abu Tahir Temim by the hand, and in that position made known to the Almoravides the death of their lord. Then his brother extended his right hand, and taking the right hand of Aly he uttered the oath of obedience with a clear voice, which done he exclaimed to the assembled Xeques, "Come all, and offer the oath of allegiance to the Ameer of the Moslemah." Then all the Almoravide Xeques, with those of Zanhaga, Masamuda, and other tribes there present, took the oath as required, together with the Alimes and Alfakis. Thus it was that the oath of allegiance was administered and taken in Morocco: to the other provinces the new king immediately sent letters, to Almagreb no less than to Spain, and to Velad Alkibla, giving all notice of the death of his father and lord, and of his own exaltation to the throne. He commanded in those same letters that the Xeques should cause him to be proclaimed in all his cities, and have the Chotba made for him in the mosques.

Then there came messengers to the king from the city of Fez, giving him intelligence to the effect that his nephew,

Yahye, the son of Abi Bekar Ben Juzef, who was Wali of the city, by appointment of King Juzef, his grandfather, had no sooner heard of that monarch's death, and the proclamation of his uncle Aly, than he rose in rebellion against the latter, considering himself to be much wronged by his accession, and declaring himself opposed to his proclamation, which he would not suffer to take place in the city of Fez,—a decision wherein he was upheld by many of the noble generals of Lamtuna.

This unexpected intelligence displeased King Aly greatly, and he at once departed from Morocco to march against his nephew. But when the army of the king arrived in the neighbourhood of Fez, Yahye Ben Abi Bekar, not considering himself sufficiently strong to oppose his uncle or defend the city against his troops, fled at once and made no resistance, whereupon Aly took possession of Medina Fez without delay. This event occurred on Wednesday, the 8th day of Rebie Postrera, in the year 500.

Some authors relate the affair in a somewhat different manner; they say that when Aly had reached Medina Magalia, which is on the confines of the district of Fez, he wrote to his nephew, reproving him for his disobedience, but with much gentleness, and inviting him to surrender himself to his mercy, by proffering the oath of obedience, as all the rest of his kinsmen had done. They add that Aly sent letters of similar import to the Xeques of Fez, admonishing them very mildly, but bidding them be sure that he would himself be in the midst of them without delay. These messengers and letters having been received by Yahye Ben Abi Bekar, he convoked the Mexuar, or council of the city, and would have had the nobles prepare for the defence of the same, but the Xeques and principal inhabitants were opposed to his wishes in that respect, advising him rather to resign all thoughts of resistance, and refer himself to the mercy of his uncle with assurances of obedience. They declared that this was the only step suitable to his condition, seeing that it was impossible to maintain the city, since all the people were disposed to accept the King Aly Ben Juzef for their sovereign. These nobles added that without the concurrence of the people they could but poorly maintain

the city, however willing they might themselves be to labour for his interest and die in his service.

The authorities here in question furthermore affirm that Yahye Ben Abi Bekar, hearing this opinion of the Xeques, became distrustful of their purposes, and going secretly forth from Medina Fez, departed with a few followers and fled to Telencen, of which city Mezdeli was the Wali; that on his way thither, and at Guadi Mulua, Yahye was met by the General Mezdeli, the latter being at that moment on his return from presenting himself to give welcome to King Aly, and congratulate him on his exaltation to the throne. When Yahye Ben Abi Bekar, therefore, had informed him of what his own intentions were, Mezdeli dissuaded him from any further attempts of the kind, assuring him that he could not possibly succeed in his enterprise; and eventually prevailing on the prince to follow his counsels, he returned to the King Aly Ben Juzef, taking Yahye in his company. The latter then remained to await the result in his tent on the banks of the Guadixedrua, while Mezdeli sought the presence of Aly; Yahye enduring much anxiety meanwhile, and being full of fears.

Mezdeli having entered and saluted the king, soon made known to him the cause of his prompt return, and added that he had persuaded the Wali Yahye with much facility to render himself to his mercy. Thereupon Aly Ben Juzef gave him many thanks for that good office, praising and rejoicing over the acceptable service he had thereby rendered, and giving Mezdeli full assurance of security for his nephew Yahye, whom he freely pardoned.

Yahye Ben Abi Bekar was immediately informed of that disposition on the part of his uncle, and presenting himself with much submission, he took the oath of obedience, the Ameer repeating his assurance of forgiveness. But for the greater security of Prince Yahye the king assigned him the city of Gezira Morca as his residence. From that place Yahye repaired after the lapse of a certain period to Sahva, whence he proceeded to the Hegiaz, and made his pilgrimage to the house of God. This done, he returned to his uncle, who gave him permission to remain at the court of Morocco, where he lived in much tranquillity for some time.

Finally, however, Yahye Ben Abi Bekar was involved in suspicion as relating to a certain conspiracy and insurrection when he was sent to Gezira Alhadra; and in that city he resided until his death.

The first visit paid by King Aly to his Spanish dominions, after he had ascended the throne, was in that same year of 500 in which his father Juzef had departed to the mercy of Allah. He had no sooner arrived in Algezira than the Cadies of the Aljamas came to do him homage; with the Walies, the governors of cities, the learned sages, the cavaliers, and many of the people, all of whom he received with much kindness, and dismissed well content. On that occasion Aly removed the Wali of Cordova, Abu Abdallah Ben Alhaug, from his government, and appointed in his place the Alcayde Abu Abdallah Muhamad Aben Zelfa. Other arrangements he also made for the better administration of his affairs in Andalusia, and having done that the king returned to Africa.

In the year 501 the King Aly Ben Juzef passed over a second time for the purpose of making war on the Christians, when he sent before him his brother Temim, who had been Wali of Almagreb, to the end that the latter might prepare all that should be needful to the success of the campaign. He now gave Prince Temim the government of Valencia, and placed in his stead at Almagreb the previous Wali of Cordova, Abu Abdallah Ben Alhaug, who had gone from Cordova to be Wali of Fez, but retained that charge for a few months only.

When Temim arrived in Spain, he proceeded to make incursions on the land of Axarkia* and the frontiers of Saragossa, on which occasion it was that the renowned battle of Uklis, fought with the Christians, took place. Temim Ben Juzef had proceeded to Granada, and having there assembled a powerful army, with a carefully selected body of horse, he had proceeded to ravage the lands of the Infidel, and laying siege to the stronghold of Uklis, in which there was a vast horde of Christians entrusted with the defence thereof by King Alfonso, he pressed that fortress so closely that the garrison could not maintain

* The East.

their ground, insomuch that Temim obtained possession of the place, and then continued his devastating incursions on the Christian territory.

Intelligence of these events having been sent to King Alfonso, he became violently enraged at the losses thus inflicted on him, and commanded his forces to march on the frontier, there to restrain the aggressions of the Moslemah. Then his wife counselled him to the effect that since the leader of the Moslemah force was the son of the Moslemah king, so he, Alfonso, should send forth against him the Prince Don Salcho,* son of the king of the Christians, and her own. This advice Alfonso pursued; he sent his son, with the noblest of his generals, and a very large army, with which the prince directed his march towards Uklis.

Now when Temim Ben Juzef heard of his approach, he was inclined to abandon the fortress, and retire before the Christian prince could arrive, without encountering the host of the Infidels. But taking counsel with Abdallah, Muhamed Ben Fatema, Muhamad Ben Aixa, and other valiant Almoravide generals, they dissuaded him from that purpose, and encouraged him to await the enemy within the fortress, having no fear of his power. Yet Temim persisted in his determination, and they then said to him, "Be not afraid; although we are but three thousand cavaliers, yet the difference is great between us and those who come against us:" words by which the Prince was reassured, and resolved to await the foe.

But the evening of that day had not well begun to close when the Christians were seen to arrive with many thousand men, and Temim once more proposed that they should abandon the fortress and fly before them; again, therefore, he held counsel with his Almoravides, but there now remained no possibility of flight, yet neither could they maintain themselves in the fortress, since they had not force enough to secure them in the possession thereof; they consequently resolved to sally forth and give their assailants battle. At the dawn of day the Moslemah rushed upon the Christians accordingly; they commenced the contest with the courage of despair, attacking the

* Sancho.

enemy with such heroic valour and resolution that no more terrible or more obstinate encounter had ever been seen. Finally the Faithful defeated those Infidel bands, and Salcho, the son of King Alfonso, died in the fight, with about twenty thousand Christians of his army. The victorious Moslemah then entered Uklis sword in hand,* many of their number having that day obtained the crown of martyrdom.

When the news of that great battle, of the defeat of his people and the death of his son, reached the King Don Alfonso, his grief was such that he fell sick with the pain thereof, and, as he was then old and weak, he died of that sorrow.† Temim Ben Juzef then wrote letters to the king his brother, giving him an account of that glorious victory, which was one of the most fortunate ever obtained by the Moslemah arms.

In the following year of 502, Muhamad Ben Alhâg went forth from Valencia by order of the Prince Temim Ben Juzef, and entered the territory of Saragossa with the pretext of giving aid to the King Almostain Ben Hud; that brave and virtuous monarch being then engaged in war with the Christians, whose territories he had long been ravaging, and many of whose towns he had burnt. King Alfonso on his part, though much occupied by his wars with other Christian Powers, had retorted by devastating the banks of the Ebro: his generals had taken Tauste, Burgos, and Magalia, they had, moreover, made fearful ravages in the open country lying around Saragossa. But there now came the general of the Almoravides into the field, and at his appearance the Christians raised their camp, when Muhamad Ben Alhag entered the city, and thence wrote an account of his victory to the King Aly Ben Juzef.

No long time had elapsed from that event before King Almostain Billah became distrustful of the Almoravide general, whose good faith he saw reason to doubt; wherefore, fearing lest Muhamad should seize his person and send him to the towers of Agmat, as had been done in the case of

* "Here," observes Condé, "there would seem to be a contradiction, for if Temim already held the place, why enter it sword in hand?"

† In twenty days, according to Abdel Halim.—*Condé.*

that unfortunate sovereign, Aben Abed, King of Seville, he departed from Saragossa without naming his intention to Aben Alhaug, and retired to the frontier of those Comarcas, where he had several strong fortresses: he was accompanied in that removal by many of the most noble Xeques of his kingdom.

A short time afterwards, Aben Alhaug, conformably to the orders he had received from the Prince Temim Ben Juzef, directed his march against the territory of Barcelona, his incursions on which district were made with great success. In his absence, the King Almostain Billah returned to Saragossa, when the Christians immediately renewed their attack on his dominions; and such was their boldness, that they carried the fury of their onslaughts even to the gates of the city.

The General of the Almoravides, even Muhamad Ben Alhaug, was meanwhile on his return from the expedition alluded to above, and was bringing in his train much valuable spoil, with many captives which he had made therein. At a certain point he directed those who had the charge of these riches to take the high roads, as being more easy for their travel, while he pursued his way through the passes and by the hill-paths of that mountainous region, a wild and rocky wilderness, in which there were, nevertheless, some few settlements of the Moslemah people. In this rude way of mountain and precipice, which Aben Alhaug had never previously pursued, and in the midst thereof, where the difficulties were at the greatest, he was attacked by an ambush which the Christians had placed there, and those infidels now fell upon his people with a fury so violent, as well as unexpected, that they had not time to get into any order for defence; wherefore, attempting to fly in much disorder, the Moslemah suffered a cruel slaughter: almost all the cavaliers of Lamtuna perished in that struggle, or, being grievously wounded, were made captive. Their General Muhamad Aben Alhaug himself also died, fighting like the brave warrior that he was ever reputed to be: the Alcayde Muhamad Aben Aixa alone succeeded in saving his life by flight on a very swift mare, which he had mounted in the early morning, and that was no slight proof of his good fortune.

When the news of this misfortune reached Aly Ben Juzef, he was much grieved thereby, the death of Aben Alhaug more particularly causing him great sorrow. He appointed in his place the general Abu Bekar Ben Ibrahim Ben Tafelût, who was then in the Waliazgo of Murcia. That officer at once departed to the frontiers of Saragossa, which he reached by Valencia, Tartuxa, and Fraga, whence he passed into the territory of Barcelona, where he destroyed the crops and set fire to the farms, having first plundered the latter of all their flocks and products. This Abu Bekar effected in twenty days, during which time alone he had encamped in the district; and having done so much, he was returning to the territory of Saragossa, when Aben Radmir, king of the country he had thus ravaged, came forth to meet him with a large army gathered from Bazit, Barcelona, and Velad Araguna: thereupon a stubborn encounter ensued, in which many Christians lost their lives, and nearly seven hundred Moslemah obtained the crown of martyrdom.

CHAP. XXV.—THIRD ARRIVAL OF ALY BEN JUZEF IN SPAIN. HE BESIEGES TOLEDO. IS UNABLE TO REDUCE THAT CITY. VICTORIES OF KING RADMIR. CAMPAIGNS OF MEZDELI.

THE King Aly now perceiving that his presence was required in Spain, determined to pass over to that country, which he did in the year 503, proposing to take part in the Sacred War in his own person. He left Ceuta on the 15th of the moon of Muharram, and sailed to Spain, taking with him a powerful army, the cavalry of which amounted to no less than one hundred thousand men. Arrived in Cordova, he remained there for a month, but after that delay he set forth for the sacred war, which he waged in a manner that was terrible to behold. Entering the city of Tabut by storm, the King Aly Ben Juzef successively occupied twenty-seven fortresses of the Comarcas of Toledo; and such was the terror caused by his devastations in that district, that the people fled their homes, those who could not find

shelter in the cities and forts taking refuge in the rude mountains and inaccessible wilderness, insomuch that all the land remained desolate and as it were a mere desert.

King Aly then laid siege to the city of Toledo, and sat before that place with his people for the space of a month, during which there was a battle fought at the Bab* Alcantara, which was gained by the Moslemah with a great carnage of the Christians, who did not dare to make any further sally, although the enemy was encamped at their gates. The Almunia, which is without the walls, was also taken by the Almoravide troops; but King Aly perceiving that he was losing his time, because Toledo is so strong that it was not possible for him to enter it by force, he continued his devastations of the country, having first occupied the towns of Magdit and Guadilhigiara. He next passed on with his host to Medina Talbira, which he likewise besieged, and after many obstinate encounters the place was taken by force of arms, when such a carnage of the Christians ensued, that not one remained alive of all that were in it. Content with that vengeance, the King Aly Ben Juzef then returned triumphant, and passed over into Africa.

About the same period, the brave and excellent King of Saragossa, Ahmed Abu Giafar Almostain Billah Aben Hud, also went forth against the Christians, who had laid siege to the fortress of Tudila, a stronghold on the shore of the Ebro, whither he now repaired with a chosen body of cavalry to bear succours to his people. Here the Christians gave him battle; and in that encounter, which was a furious and obstinate one, the King, fighting in person, was pierced through the breast with a lance, and fell dead from his horse. This is related by Abdallah Ben Aita, who was present at the battle, with the learned Asafir of Jaen.

On the death of their valiant king and general, the Moslemah abandoned the field, which remained to the Christians, who took the city. This defeat and heavy loss for Islam took place in the year 503. The Moslemah bore the remains of the virtuous Ahmed of Saragossa to the capital

* Gate of Alcantara.

of his kingdom, where they buried him in his vestments and arms as he was, all the city following his bier, and long lamenting the loss they had sustained. The son of their beloved monarch was immediately proclaimed king by the inhabitants of Saragossa; his name was Abdelmelic Ben Ahmed Abu Meruan, and he was called Amad-Dolah. He was a brave warrior, but did not possess equal prudence with his father. He had given clear proofs of bravery in the battle of Huesca, and in the various encounters before Tauste and Lerida, but had scarcely the policy needful to maintain himself among the powerful and ambitious neighbours by whom he was surrounded.

The general of the Almoravides, Syr Aben Bekir, had meanwhile been occupied with the Algarve of Spain, where he took the cities of Zintiras, Badajoz, Jabora, Bortecal, and Lisbona, with all such towns held by the Christians as had not averted their fall by declaring themselves in favour of the Almoravides. In the year 504, and in the moon of Dilcada of that year, Syr Ben Bekar wrote an account of these things, describing the state of the country, and this letter he sent to the King Aly Ben Juzef.

While the Almoravides were thus fighting against the Christians on the frontiers with various fortune, the noble Xeques of Lamtuna, who held the governments and Alcaydias of the kingdom, did their best to gain the esteem and good will of the people whom they ruled; but these continued to consider them rather as tyrannous oppressors than as protecting auxiliaries and friends, which was the character they desired to obtain. Yet the fear of that vast body of cavalry and men in arms of every kind, which remained permanently in the country, restrained the people from giving expression to these feelings, and maintained them in obedience to those new lords. The Cadies, judges, and other learned men to whom the arrangement of these affairs was committed, were meanwhile more insufferable to the people than were the generals and soldiers who had been born and bred in the deserts among fierce lions and hungry tigers; these being for the most part a frank and simple race, detesting all deceits and vileness, nor by any means so covetous as were the Cadies, who oppressed the people under the shadow of the military occupants, basely deceiving

the latter, while they robbed the poor and helpless of those fruits of their labour which they had hardly obtained in the painful sweat of their brows. The receivers of the imposts were for the most part Jews, who extorted the taxes from Moslemah as well as Christians, after the number of their heads, but were in fact no other than the instruments and ministers of that insatiable avarice and covetousness to which their superiors in office had resigned themselves as a prey.

Now at this time the Almoravide general, Syr Ben Abi Bekir, who had returned from his campaigns in the Algarve, fell sick in the city of Seville, and his malady increased to so great an extent that the resources of medicine could no longer be made available to his cure, since he was now very old; wherefore he departed to the mercy of Allah, and that event took place in the year 507. He was then buried within the city, and his government was given to Muhamad Aben Fatima, who held it during three years only, at the end of which time he also died.

In the same year of 507, the general Mezdeli fell upon the Comarcas of Toledo with the sword of desolation, cutting up and burning the fields and farms of that territory even to the gates of the city itself. He caused the fort of Servand and that of Azquena to be razed to the earth, and delivered unceasing assaults against the city for eight days, using various machines and engines of war for that purpose. Mezdeli caused whatever Christians he found in the forts, or could get into his hands, to be put to death; nay, he did not even spare the women and children.

When the news of these devastations, and of the distress to which the city of Toledo was now reduced, were taken to Albarhanis, King of the Christians, that leader came to the succour of the place with a very powerful host. This being told to Mezdeli, he struck his camp and marched as if to the encounter of Albarhanis; but he passed before the Christian host during a very dark night, and escaping undiscovered, proceeded to Cordova, a conqueror laden with the richest spoils. Having arrived there he instantly dispatched a force to garrison Arahina, which he fortified strongly, placing therein a large body of cavalry, with cross-bowmen and troops of other arms.

Shortly afterwards Mezdeli was informed that the Conde Garcis, Lord of Guadalgiara, had appeared before Medina Cœli, and he at once set forth to his encounter with a carefully chosen band; but when intelligence of Mezdeli's approach was brought to the Conde Garcis, the Christian leader abandoned the siege, and striking his camp, fled before the Moslemah general. Nor had the information the Conde had received been false, seeing that immediately on his traces followed Mezdeli, who took possession of all his baggage and machines of war.

In the following year, 508 namely, that brave general of the Moslemah, who had been Wali of Cordova, met his death in battle, and his glorious departure took place on the occasion of a certain onslaught which he had made upon the Christians, and in which he died, fighting as a brave man should do. The account of that affair was sent to the King Aly Ben Juzef, who grieved much for the loss of so brave a general, and gave the Waliazo of Cordova to Muhamad Ben Mezdeli, son of the fallen commander.

Now Muhamad was a no less valiant and bold leader than his father had been, but unhappily he did not retain either his government or his life more than three months. Determined to exact a full measure of vengeance for the death of his father, Muhamad Ben Mezdeli marched to the frontier, and died in a battle with the Christians, exhibiting similar bravery and meeting a similar fate with the progenitor whom he sought to avenge.

In the year 509, King Aly sent his ships against the islands on the East of Spain, which the Christians had seized upon, and where those Infidels were robbing the Moslemah of all that they possessed, slaying the inhabitants moreover in great numbers. But the mere report that a Moslemah fleet was approaching, caused the Christians to take flight, since they did not dare to wait till they were driven out by force of arms: but they carried with them a vast number of captives, killing not a few of the remaining inhabitants with circumstances of singular cruelty.

Now about this time Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Mezdeli proceeded to Valencia, with a large body of cavalry and other troops, which he had assembled in Granada. He remained in Valencia for some time, and in the year 510

repaired to Saragossa, then hard pressed by the King of the Christians, Aben Radmir, who had surrounded the city with his army, and was devastating the Comarcas. Many sharp engagements and obstinate battles then took place, when Aben Radmir was finally compelled to raise the siege and retire from the territory of Saragossa. But the King Amad Dolah Aben Hud felt great distrust of the Almoravide general, and no sooner found himself freed from the Christian besiegers of his city, than he retired with his family and treasures to the fortress of Rot Alyehud. Yet for lack of good counsel he passed his hours there in much doubt and irresolution, since he knew not finally in whom to put his trust, nor whether he ought to take refuge with the Christian enemy of the Faith, and avail himself of their aid, or place his fate in the hands of the Almoravides his allies and the believers in his own Law. Then the devil blinded him to the right path, darkening his eyes that he might take the more evil road; wherefore the decision that he adopted was a dangerous error, and he agreed with the Christians to be their ally and friend against the power of the Almoravides.

Finding this, the people of Saragossa, disgusted at such an alliance, wrote letters to the Lamtuni general, Muhamad Ben Alhaug, who was Wali of Valencia; and as we are informed by Alcodai, they invited him to repair to their city, when themselves and the whole country would declare for the Almoravide sovereign, even Aly Ben Juzef Aben Taxfin. And this was done accordingly, Muhamad Ben Alhaug attacking the Christians on the fourth day of Ramazan, in the year 512, and defeating them in a pitched battle.

The King Aben Radmir had meanwhile conceived great hopes from the friendship offered him by Amad Dolah, of Saragossa; he assembled a vast body of troops, and fell with all his power on the Almoravide captain, Abdallah Ben Mezdeli, who was defending the frontiers of Saragossa. The forces met at no great distance from the capital, when a terrible encounter ensued, in which the valiant Mezdeli died fighting with the noblest of his generals, the Moslemah being defeated with great carnage, and the Christians pursuing their scattered remnants during several successive

days. That done the conquerors passed on to Lerida, which they also took, with many other fortresses to the Guf* of that territory. After the Almoravide army had been thus defeated and dispersed, the King Amad Dolah Aben Hud returned to Saragossa, where he confirmed his perfidious treaty of alliance with Aben Radmir, King of the Christians.

The account which Aly Ben Juzef received of these misfortunes made a deep impression on his mind, and he determined to repair to Spain in the course of the next year. But that no time might be lost, he at once dispatched his brother, the Prince Temim Aben Juzef, to the Axarquia† of Spain; commanding him to assemble a large body of troops, and with that force to succour the Moslemah on the frontiers of Saragossa and Lerida, they being in imminent danger of ruin and even of extirpation. Yahye‡ relates that Aly himself also passed over into Spain, entered the territory of Gallicia, and having taken the city of Calambria by force of arms, laid waste the country around it, and then returned to Ceuta. This he did in the year 511; and the same writer affirms that the traces of that terrible incursion remained long clearly visible on the face of the land.

The forces of Andalusia had meanwhile assembled and joined with those of Temim Ben Juzef, who was then at Valencia. From that city the prince then marched forth, having in his company his kinsman, Abu Yahye Ben Taxfin, governor of Cordova, and Muhamad Ben Alhaug, Wali of Valencia, with many noble Xeques of Lamtuna, the Almoravide cavalry, and a strong body of foot-soldiers. With these he fell on the territory of Lerida, and Aben Radmir, fearing to be besieged in that city, fled from the place, but did not refuse to give battle. That encounter proved to be a sanguinary one, in which the loss was very great on our side as well as on that of the Christians, and the Prince Temim Ben Taxfin, perceiving his strength to be much diminished, considered it advisable to suspend the struggle,

* Guf, the North. † Axarquia, the South.

‡ The writer so called is Ahmed Ben Yahye Ben Omeira, the continuator of that brief chronicle written by El Homaidi, of Cordova, which Ahmed Ben Yahye brings down to the year of the Hegira 560.—*Tr.*

when he returned to Valencia with but little more than ten thousand men.

When the King of the Christians, Aben Radmir, perceived his arms to be thus prosperous, he departed from the agreement which he had made with Amad Dolah, King of Saragossa, whom he now required to abandon that city to his possession; and the Moslemah sovereign, discovering that he was himself about to be taken in the nets which he had helped to weave and set for his brethren of the Law, knew not whither to turn for relief. He gave no reply to Aben Radmir, but turned all his thoughts and care to the fortifying of his city, providing it with whatever might aid him to support the siege which he could not but see was awaiting him.

Nor did King Radmir lose any time on his part, but assembled troops from the mountains of Afranc and other parts, in such vast numbers that they resembled ant-heaps or clouds of the locust. With these forces he then came to invest Saragossa, and having taken his measures for attack, he caused great towers of wood to be constructed, which he dragged close to the walls by means of oxen: on these towers he raised catapults, and other machines of various kinds. No long time elapsed before Aben Radmir believed himself on the point of realising his hopes, and gaining possession of the city, which he invested so closely that the greater part of the inhabitants finally perished of hunger, the place being very thickly peopled, and the provisions which the inhabitants had been able to collect before the siege had commenced, not sufficing to supply the wants of so large a population for more than a very short time.

In this grievous condition, the King Amad Dolah, who saw no prospect of succour but from heaven alone, sent to treat with Aben Radmir for the surrender of his capital, when the Christian offered him security for his life and treasures, with the same for the lives and property of the people, adding permission to the latter to continue their dwellings where they were, or to retire elsewhere, at their pleasure. On these terms Saragossa was surrendered, when many of the noble Moslemah left that place to settle in Valencia and Murcia. The King of Saragossa, Amad Dolah, himself withdrew to the fortress of Rot Alyehud with

all his family, and had not done so many days before there came to the relief of the city a body of ten thousand cavalry, which Aly Ben Juzef had sent over from Africa. But when the generals in command discovered that Saragossa was already in the power of the Christians, they made halt and did not proceed further.

In the following year, King Radmir, inflated with the victories he had obtained, again assembled his forces and fell upon the territories of the Moslemah, when Aly Ben Juzef sent his brother Prince Temim against him with a well-appointed body of horse and foot. These troops met the enemy of God in a place called Cutanda, when a battle was fought in which the Moslemah were broken and defeated with a cruel slaughter, twenty thousand volunteers having there resigned their lives; but of the rest of those troops not one was slain, and the remainder of the routed army fled to Valencia. In this terrible combat fell Abu Bekir Ben Alari, with many other distinguished persons and generals of high reputation, among whom was the Alfaki, Ahmed Ben Ibrahim Abu Aly, who had been Cadi of Xilvis: that unhappy conflict took place on Thursday the 19th day of the moon of Rebie Primera,* in the year 514.

By this victory the enemy of Allah obtained possession of Medina Calatayub, which is situate on the frontier of Spain, and thence he continued to ravage the territories of the Moslemah, fortifying himself in that Comarca without neglecting to maintain the supremacy which he had acquired in certain parts of Alguf.†

These misfortunes were made known to the King Aly Ben Juzef without delay, when he commanded that further preparations should be made for landing troops in Spain, with intention to proceed himself to the Sacred War, and hoping then to ameliorate the condition of his frontiers. This was the third visit of Aly Ben Juzef to Andalusia since his elevation to the throne. He assembled a vast number of troops, Almoravides, volunteers of the Alarabes, people of the Cabilas of Zeneta and Masamuda, and other tribes of

* Other ancient documents assign this battle to the 24th day of Rebie Primera.—*Condé.*

† The North.

Barbary, with all which he crossed the sea very happily, and reached the city of Cordova in safety. Here all the Walies and Alcaydes of Andalusia presented themselves before him, when Aly took care to inform himself of the condition of each province and city in respect to the government thereof. The Cadiazgo of Cordova, which had been held by Aben Raxid, the king then gave to the Cadi Abul Casem Ben Hamid, and having made certain other arrangements of similar kind, he departed to the land of Algarve. Here Aly Ben Juzef entered the city of Medina Sanabria* by force of arms, killing or taking captive the inhabitants. With the same cruelty he treated many other towns of Algarve, laying waste the fields, carrying off the flocks and herds, destroying the villages, burning the farms, and making the whole land desolate until he had subjugated the entire district, which he left in total ruin—a mere desert. The Christians fled in terror before his conquering host, finding no means of defending themselves, nor any refuge from that fearful and devastating tempest, save in the recesses of their mountains and among the fortresses which they still retained amidst the inaccessible rocks of the wilderness.

CHAP. XXVI.—Of the insurrection against the Almoravides in Cordova, of the troubles and rebellion in Africa, and of the origin of Abdallah, or el Mehedi.

In the following year, which was that of the Hegira 515, Aly Ben Juzef returned to Africa, leaving the affairs of Spain in the care of his brother, the Prince Temim, who had not an hour of repose.

Yahye Ben Ahmed tells us that the fourth visit of King Aly to Spain took place in that same year of 515, and was occasioned by a rebellion or insurrection of the people which took place at Cordova; one of the most renowned Almoravide generals, called Abu Yahye Ben Tobada, being then Wali of that city. The circumstances which gave rise to the disturbance were the aggressions insolently made by the

* This is believed to be the city called elsewhere Calambria.—*Condé.*

Almoravide soldiers composing the garrison, on the inhabitants of the place, to whom they offered every species of affront; to say nothing of the losses which they inflicted on them by plundering them of their property, destroying their gardens, and carrying to their barracks whatever they could lay their hands on. Not content with all this, they next proceeded to enter the houses of the citizens and take their wives and daughters by force; complaints to the authorities did not suffice to restrain this insolence, and many men took vengeance for those intolerable injuries with their own hands, but all was insufficient to keep that arrogant horde of Africans in order; wherefore the people at length flew to arms, attacking the Almoravides by common consent, and killing many of their number. The Africans then entrenched themselves in isolated dwellings and towers, but there also they were surrounded, and when other means failed, the people mined the buildings, which having forced, they entered with fury, slaying all whom they found.

The news of this rebellion were promptly carried to Aly Ben Juzef, who was then at Morocco, and believing his presence required to remedy the evils that might result from such a state of things, more especially if the other cities of Spain should follow the example of Cordova, he made preparation for proceeding thither in person, determined to put down the disorder prevailing there by the strong hand. To that intent he summoned his people from the Cabilas of Zeneta, Zanhaga, and Masamuda, adding others from the Barbary tribes inhabiting the mountains of Daren,* and having thus assembled a large force, both of cavalry and infantry, the king passed over to Andalusia, proceeding without delay to Cordova.

Having arrived before the city, he there met the relics of the garrison, with the Wali, Abu Yahye Ben Tobada, in full flight before the people, they having with difficulty succeeded in saving their lives from the fury of the popular vengeance. The inhabitants of Cordova, when they learned the arrival of the king, closed their gates and fortified all the streets which led to the walls, taking every other measure in their power for increasing their strength and preparing

* The Allas or Bright mountains, that is to say.—*Condé*

to support a long and vigorous siege. At the same time they took counsel among themselves, considering what was advisable to be done in those circumstances, and how they were to act in relation to their king, whose own servants and soldiers had given them just cause to take up arms. The Alimes and Alfakis of Cordova then said that it would first of all be proper to make known to King Aly Ben Juzef the fact that this rebellion had not been voluntary on the part of the inhabitants, but had been imposed upon them in the use of the natural right which they had to defend, not their property only, but their lives, their women, and their households. King Aly must be informed, they added, that the cause of the insurrection had been the unbridled insolence of the Almoravides, to whom the whole blame of what had occurred was justly due. If, then, the king, being thus informed, should resolve to protect those haughty and arrogant provokers of all the evil, the people of Cordova would in that case have a just cause for resistance against him in defence of their persons, their lives, the honour of their families, and their lawful possessions; nay, that they should, and must, and ought to maintain the defence until it should please God to send a remedy for their misfortunes.

In pursuance of the opinions and advice thus expressed, the people of Cordova refused to give the king admission to the city, which he therefore attacked with fury, and continued the assault thereof for many days. Finally, the inhabitants becoming weary of the struggle and of the fatigues and privations they were enduring, agreed to send an embassy to King Aly, entreating him to consider that the city was his own, and to treat it accordingly; they begged him also to remember the charge made to him by his father, King Jusef, at the hour of his death, in relation to that city of Cordova, and added that he ought to excuse what had been done in respect of his exclusion, since if he examined the causes given, he would find them to be a complete exculpation of the citizens.

The persons then despatched as messengers to the king were among the noblest of the city, and Aly Ben Juzef received them well; it was agreed that a certain amount of money in gold doubloons should be paid by the citizens as indemnity to such of the Almoravides as had lost their

property and had had their houses sacked in the rebellion; these conditions being made to the satisfaction of all parties, the king entered Cordova and things returned to their previous condition. The troubles of the moment being thus quieted, Aly Ben Juzef did not long delay his departure from Cordova, being recalled to Africa by advices which informed him that the kingdom of Sûs Alaksa had been roused to rebellion by El Mehedi.

The preparations for warfare and rising of the people in Africa, which had caused the king's return to that country, had been provoked, as hath been said, by El Mehedi, whose appearance had placed all the land in a state of insurrection, and subsequently kept all Africa in arms for a period of several years. Nay, the enmity of this man, called El Mehedi, was ultimately the cause which brought ruin to the powerful empire of the Almoravides, who were at that time lords of the principal part of Spain and Africa, seeing that there were but few towns in both these regions which did not pay them obedience and tremble at their might. The origin of these events was on this wise:—

In the land of Sûs there dwelt a man of the Cabila of Masamuda, who was called Muhamad Ben Abdallah, the son of Tamurt, but who afterwards received the name of El Mehedi. This Abdallah travelled to the East, where he heard the lessons given by the sages of the land, and more especially those of the renowned Aben Ahmed Algazali, with whom he remained three years. After that time he returned to Africa, re-entering his native country in the commencement of the moon of Rebie Primera in the year 510. No long time elapsed after the return of Abdallah Ben Tamurt before there rose a rumour among the people in respect to this man's rigid holiness, the energetic freedom of his preaching in reprehension of vice, whether in kings or their subjects, the austere sanctity of his life, and even the peculiarity of his clothing, all which contributed greatly to move the minds of the people. He had given himself the title of El Mehedi* to attract the superstitious and ignorant, who rarely discover the treacherous purposes of such impostors.

Now it chanced that this man, arriving in a certain

* El Mehedi: the Guide, Leader, or Teacher.

village on the confines of Telencen, called Tejema, there met a youth of beautiful countenance and good disposition, called Abdelmumen Ben Aly, who was then on his way to the East in the company of his uncle, who was conducting him thither for the purposes of study. Then El Mehedi began to talk with the youth, proposing, after some conversation, himself to instruct him in that knowledge which he was going to seek in the East, and the uncle of Abdelmumen agreed to this proposal. El Mehedi was then dwelling in the suburb of Melala, and there he taught the youth whatever he considered likely to promote his own purposes, more especially certain prophecies written in a book which he showed to the young Abdelmumen, and wherein there stood written, words to the following effect:—"The empire of life and of the Law shall not arise through any other than Abdelmumen, the Light of the Almoravides."

When El Mehedi had instructed the youth to such extent as he thought needful, and had sufficiently prepared him for his purposes, he appointed him to be his Vizier, and travelled with him to the land of Beni Xiris, where he was joined by another youth, called Abu Muhamad Bekir, when they all proceeded to Fez, and thence to the city of Morocco.

In the last-named place it happened on a certain Juma,† when the people of the city were all assembled in the great mosque to make their Azala, that this Muhamad Ben Tamart pressed forward beyond the first rank of the worshippers, and into that place which is usually taken by the Imaum alone. All present were amazed at this boldness, and a minister of the mosque, approaching the man, bade him know that none could take that place, save the King of the Moslemah alone. Then did this Aben Abdallah turn gravely to the minister thus warning him, and with a severe countenance, but in calm tones, replied to him with these words from the Koran, *inne el mesagide lillahi*, which signify "assuredly the temples belong to God alone;" which said, he turned towards the assembled worshippers and continued his recitation until he had repeated the whole of the

† Juma: Friday, which, as the reader will remember, is the Mahomedan Sabbath.

chapter, to the great amazement of the people, who all regarded him with admiration.

Soon after this occurrence, the king arrived to make his prayer, and the people all rose as usual to make him the customary salutation. Muhamad Ben Abdallah alone retained the place he had assumed, without the least movement, not even lifting his eyes to look at the king, nor making the smallest change in his attitude, all which was astonishing to the populace, whose admiration was greatly increased thereby.

But when the Azala was ended, Abdallah was the first to rise and salute the king, and at the close of his Azalam he said: "Beware that thou seek a remedy for the evils and injustice committed in thy kingdom, for God will demand from thee an account of all the nations committed to thy care." King Aly replied no word; but the phrase uttered by Abdallah had produced on the light minds of the populace all the effect he had hoped from it. The king supposed him to be some holy man who must have taken upon him the vows of an austere and zealous Marabout, and therefore sent to tell him that if he had any desire or want he might name it, when his wish should be fulfilled. Abdallah replied in the same measured and presumptuous manner, saying that his desires were not of this world, unless so far as they concerned the correction of unholiness and an amelioration of the state of the people.

This answer caused the King Aly Ben Juzef to conceive some little disquietude, and the more as he was then told that the man Abdallah preached publicly on the open places, squares, and markets, as well as in the mosques, reproving all profane and excessive pleasures,—a line of conduct whereby he had made himself very conspicuous, drawing after him a vast crowd of people wherever he appeared, and being heard with great admiration by all.

The King then commanded his Alimes to question and examine the man, that they might know what opinion should be formed respecting him,—whether he were in truth a wise man, and whether his views and intentions were reprehensible, or good and worthy of attention.

Among the Alimes so instructed was one of the chief and principal, called Abu Abdallah Melik Ben Wahib, a native

of Andalusia, and he with the other Alimes conversed several times with El Mehedi, in fulfilment of the king's command; their discourses turning on letters, the sciences, and other subjects, whereby those prudent men were enabled to penetrate the mind, character, and intentions of the pretender to holiness, when, becoming ultimately confirmed in the suspicions which they had entertained of him very early in their intercourse, they returned to the king, informing him of the judgment at which they had arrrived respecting this Mehedi, and describing the mode of proceeding which they thought it advisable to pursue with him. "O King," said the Alimes, "there can be no doubt of this man's purposes; he is labouring to excite the people to insurrection, seducing them with the hope of change, and creating a grave scandal which should at once be brought to an end. Let him be imprisoned therefore, and so cut him off from all communication with the ignorant vulgar among whom he seeks his followers."

Melik Ben Wahib, one of the wisest among them, added the following words:—"My lord O King, whose power may God perpetuate, do thou command that a prison of iron be prepared for this man, lest he cause thee to spoil a house of gold." Others of the number said, "Place this man in chains of iron to-day, my lord, if thou wilt not have him make thee hear the Atambores of rebellion on the open field to-morrow."

Now to the assembly of Alimes thus held before the king there came also his Vizier, Othman Ben Omar, who was persuaded that the fears expressed by the sages were exaggerated—since a man of low condition and little worth standing solely and alone, as did this Abdallah Ben Tahart, could scarcely give grounds for anxiety to so potent a sovereign as was Aly Ben Juzef,—wherefore, speaking in his turn, he said, "Vain and unreasonable are the fears here manifested by these Alimes, O King; neither is it worthy of thy sublime greatness to cast the eyes of attention on a man so contemptible as is this Abdallah, or to regard his opinions and extravagances."

With the council thus held, and with that advice of his Vizier, King Aly then calmed his anxiety, and paid no more attention from that time to El Mehedi. The latter, therefore,

continued to preach in public, and being left at liberty freely to promulgate his opinions, he subsequently retired to Medina Fez, where he remained in a mosque of that city for the space of four years,—until the year 514 that is to say, when he repaired to Morocco; but even there the presence of the King and court did not suffice to restrain the zeal of his discourses to the people. Entering the Aljamas and public places of all kinds, with his vizier Abdelmumen, by whom he was always accompanied, he reproved the vices and libertinage of the age with his accustomed freedom, reprehending the abuses of wine and other pleasures in which but too many were then eager to indulge, and breaking to pieces in his zealous warmth the instruments of music which accompanied the singers of licentious songs, or dances no less licentious, then daily heard and seen in the squares and markets. All these things Abdallah did without permission from the ministers of the Aljamas or of the King, who endured that scandal only because its importance was either much diminished in the relations made to him, or because the disorder was for the most part entirely concealed from his knowledge.

At length the confusion and inquietude occasioned by this man was effectually reported to King Aly, who caused him to be summoned to his presence, and said to him, "What is this, good man; and how is it that I hear these things respecting thee?" To which Abdallah replied with much calmness and gravity, "What can any man tell thee of me, unless it be that I breathe only to aspire after the other world, and seek nothing in this, having no other business here than my own, which is in truth not of this world."

King Aly was amazed at his reply, and commanded that the Alimes should again discourse with Abdallah in his presence, which was done, and the discussion was a long one; but it did not terminate to the satisfaction of the King any more than to that of the sages, who repeated the expression of their fears, and advised that he should no longer be permitted to preach to the people or disturb them with his new doctrines; they added that it would at the least be advisable to make him depart from the capital, where he did much to excite the light minds of the ignorant and vulgar,

and might cause infinite mischief, unless instantly taken in hand.

The opinions of the Alimes then prevailed, and El Mehedi being commanded to leave the city, did in effect depart with his Vizier and friend, Abdelmumen; but at no great distance from the capital, they constructed for themselves a hut among certain tombs that were there, and in this imperfect shelter they made their dwelling. Thither there soon flocked vast numbers of the people to see and hear the discourses of Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Tahart, called El Mehedi, the fame of whose sanctity soon became so widely extended that the concourse of these visitors was perpetually maintained, until at length the man was constantly surrounded by a crowd of rarely less than five hundred persons, all ready to attend him whithersoever it might please him to go, and asking nothing better than to fulfil his commands, in whatever he might see good to order. Here Abdallah began to dwell much on the irreligion and vices of the Almoravides, their masters, speaking of those chargeable on the princes and those of the common people with equal freedom, and it is true that he found sufficient materials for his discourse. At this time Abdallah began to affirm of himself that he was El Mehedi promised to the nations by God, as at that period to be sent on the earth for the correction of abuses and to reform the corrupt habitudes of men, the office of that messenger being to give them wholesome instruction and to lead them into the paths of truth and justice.

The credit of Abdallah and the number of his followers became at length so great, that King Aly Ben Juzef feared lest some insurrection should be excited by the proceedings of that fanatic; he therefore sent a warning messenger, bidding the self-elected teacher to remember the fear of God, and cease from disquieting the people. King Juzef added the further command that Muhamad Ben Abdallah should remain no longer in the city. To this El Mehedi replied, "I have already obeyed thy orders, and live among the dead in a miserable hut, wherein I think only of the life to come, and of the contempt that is due to all heretics." Then the King gave directions for his seizure, and ordered that his head should be cut off; but this command was not kept so closely secret as it should have been, and Abdallah

El Mehedi, being informed thereof, withdrew to Agmat, whither he was followed by the most zealous of his disciples. He soon afterwards repaired to Tinmaul, in the district of Sûs, entering that country in the moon of Xewal of the year 514.

Having established himself securely in the hill-town of Tinmaul, El Mehedi preached his new doctrines with much freedom, and the ceremonies he inculcated were performed by many of the barbarous race, among whose dwellings he had fixed his abode, with much devotion and exactitude; wherefore, after a time, believing the moment to be come for exhorting his followers to arms and deeds of violence against those whom he called tyrants and heretics, the teacher addressed his hearers on a certain day in the following terms:—

"Be praises to God, who performs His will, of which no power can resist the accomplishment, nor is there any who can withstand His eternal decrees.

"The grace of God be with our Lord Muhamad, His Messenger, who hath announced the coming of El Mehedi Imaum, by whose cares the earth shall be filled with justice and equity, in place of the wrongs and evils wherewith it is now covered; who shall root up the tyranny which now oppresses the world, and causes it to groan beneath the wicked feet of the evil-doer. Him hath the Lord Allah determined to send, when truth shall be obscured by falsehood, when justice hath been exiled and replaced by iniquity, and when the tyrant sits fast on the throne of goodness and rectitude. His birth-place shall be the remote Sûs Alaksa; his time shall be the last; his name the name; his employment shall be to lead his people as doth an able guide;—and this is the purpose with which I am myself now occupied."

When the speaker had uttered these words, there rose up ten men of his followers, one of whom was his Vizier and friend, Abdelmumen: these men made answer and said to him, "O thou our Lord, the words which thou hast now spoken, and thy description of the promised Mehedi, belong to thyself alone: thou art our Mehedi, our Imaum, and we strive to obey thee with the perfection of obedience." They then took the oath of allegiance, all standing

under a Carob-tree; they promised to remain ever fixed to his side, to be as his hands to defend and assist him, making war upon whomsoever should oppose his commands, and holding themselves ever ready to shed their blood in his service.

In imitation of these ten men, the natives of Barbary, who were standing around, also rose and took an oath to follow, defend, and protect their teacher against all men, making war at his command on whatever people he should be pleased to send them against, and dying, if need were, to serve him, since he was their Mehedi and their Imaum, nor permitting themselves to be intimidated by perils, death, or afflictions of any kind, which should assail them while labouring in his cause.

The ten men by whom the oath of allegiance was first taken, were as follows:* Abdelmumen Ben Aly, Omar Ben Aly, Aznaug Abu Muhamad Albaxir, Abu Chiafax, Aben Yahye Ben Yanti, Soliman Ben Chaluf, Ibrahim Ben Ismail Alhezregi, Abu Muhamad Abdel Wahid Aladri, Abu Amran Muza Ben Temar, and Abu Yahye Ben Jalût.

After these ten men there presented themselves fifty more who belonged to the principal families of the district, and these were subsequently followed by seventy others, also men in authority among the people, who took the same oath and performed the same ceremonies with those that had taken place on the day of the general allegiance. Of these two last parties, Mohamad Ben Abdallah Ben Tahart formed two councils, which he called those of the fifty and the seventy; but for the greater authority of himself as their Mehedi, he decided all the grave and more important affairs alone, or assisted only by the ten men who were his chief ministers; matters of less moment were treated by the council of fifty, while those of a simple and ordinary character were decided in the council of seventy: but his own power remained absolute and unlimited in all things.

Now the men who had thus taken the oath of allegiance to this Abdallah Ben Tahart, in Tinmaul, remained there

* All the historians vary to a certain extent in the names of these ten men.—*Condé.*

with him until the moon of the Ramazan in the year 515; and the solemn celebration of the oath, in the presence of the whole people, took place on a Juma, which was the 15th day of the said Ramazan, and at the hour of the prayer of Adohar,* on that day. The next day, which was Saturday, Abdallah proceeded to the mosque, and ascended the Almimbar,† whence he preached to the assembled people, confirming his claim to the office of their Mehedi, and addressing them in the words that follow:—

"Men of Tinmaul, I am your Mehedi or Guide, who am come to teach you the knowledge of God the Creator and Lord of all things, the righteous Judge of all his creatures."

He then exhorted them to follow his banners against the heretics; and as he finished these exhortations, he was suddenly surrounded by his ten ministers, who held their naked swords in their hands.

El Mehedi then passed through the hill-countries, preaching in all parts, and attracting the rude dwellers in those mountains to his banners, insomuch that no long time had elapsed before he found himself at the head of an innumerable multitude, which was besides daily increasing by new proselytes that came flocking from all the surrounding districts. All admired and applauded the teachings of El Mehedi, loading his name with their benedictions; his disciples also instructed the people, to whom they discoursed of the unity of God; and this doctrine being a simple one, easy of comprehension, that people of Barbary, who were a rude and ignorant race, gave their attention to the same with great pleasure, their new teachers adding nothing in respect to other attributes of the Deity, and making no mention of the Koran.

Thus it happened that all comprehended the new teachers and heard them with gladness, attaching themselves to the doctrines thus announced with an indescribable warmth of affection In this manner more than twenty thousand men of the tribe of Masamuda became the followers of El Mehedi, who chose ten thousand of the most valiant among

* Adohar: the prayer of mid-day.
† Almimbar: the pulpit or reading-desk of the mosque.

them to serve him in arms, and raising a white banner he gave the command of the host to Muhamad Albaxir, who directed his march with that force against Medina Agmat.

CHAP. XXVII.—War of the Almohades and the Almoravides.

When the Ameer, Aly Ben Juzef, who was then in Spain, heard of these things, he passed over into Africa and sent a body of the Almoravides against the bands of El Mehedi, giving the charge of the expedition to the Wali of Suz, Abu Bekir of Lamtuna, when that general lost no time in setting forth to seek the rebels, and their insurgent leader, he having boasted that he would quickly make an end of El Mehedi's imposture, and the scandal which he was causing in the country.

But when the Wali Abu Bekir discovered how vast a horde had gathered around the man, and that he now had followers from the Cabilas of Herga, Tinmaul, Hinteta, Gidmiiua, and Hescura, all Barbary tribes and families of different regions, he did not think it advisable to risk an attack, more especially after he had ascertained the order and arrangements for war already established in the rebel force. He therefore retired and reported to King Aly what was passing, telling him that El Mehedi was not followed by mean, loose, broken men alone, but was surrounded by well-appointed bands ready for combat, every ten men serving under an Almocaden or chief, who directed them with much ability. Abu Bekir furthermore added that the cavalry of the rebels was led by many valiant captains, as were also the cross-bowmen and foot-soldiers generally, all of whom were firmly resolved to die in the defence of their Imaum.

Then King Aly commanded that more troops should be assembled, and these being united to the force previously commanded by Abu Bekir, he gave charge of the whole to his brother, Abu Ishac Ibrahim, when all proceeded in search of the rebels.

The two armies soon met in open field; but when both were in order of battle, standing one opposite the other, and on the point of commencing the fight, a sudden panic seized the troops of the King,—from what cause arising is not known, nor has the appearance which the vanguard perceived to cause that terror ever been discovered: but so much is known, that the Agemies and other cavaliers who were in the advance turned their horses' heads and fled with all speed from the field; then the rest of the army, thrown into disorder by an event so unexpected, also took to flight in the utmost confusion, insomuch that the rebels beheld the field disembarrassed in a moment, and saw the forces of King Aly Ben Juzef defeated without striking a blow.

Then the people of El Mehedi, pursuing the fugitives in great haste, dyed their lances effectually in the shoulders of their terrified enemy, and slew great numbers. They made themselves masters of the flying opponent's camp, and of all the riches it contained, with a large quantity of arms and the horses laden with the tents and stores of the Almoravide troops.

Respecting this matter, Abu Juir relates that the King was not so much troubled by the defeat and rout of his army as by the knowledge that the Cabila of Hinteta and other tribes of very brave people had taken up arms against him. But that circumstance, and the defection of those Cabilas, grieved and angered him excessively; wherefore, commanding that a still larger force should be assembled, he placed these troops under the command of a cavalier of Lamtuna, called Syr Ben Musladi. That host accordingly went forth and encountered the rebels in a fierce and sanguinary battle; but the Almoravides were again defeated with a terrible slaughter.

Inflated by these victories, El Mehedi enquired of his followers, "O Almohades,"*—for so were they named—"what do the men of Lamtuna say of you?" and they replied, "They call us, by way of infamy and reproach, Abarixes—apostates and renegades." Then said Mehedi, "Ye might with better reason call them Muxesimines and Zerragines; since they have indeed departed from the ruth and gone out of the right path."

* Almohades: followers of El Mehedi.

On this occasion, El Mehedi also wrote a letter, full of pride and arrogance, to the Almoravides, and the purport of that document was as follows:—

"To the race deceived by the devil, and with whom God the Merciful is in anger; to the adverse assembly and company; to the proud people of Lamtuna.

"So much being said, know ye, of a truth, that we enjoin you to do no other than as we command our own people and impose on our own person; namely, that which is meet for the service of God, and in His fear and perpetual obedience, and to the end that ye believe how the world was created, to be afterwards brought to an end in utter annihilation. Also that Paradise is reserved for those who serve and fear God; while Gehenam with its torments of eternity hath been equally prepared for the misbelievers who offend the divine majesty of God.

"For it is a certain truth, and according to the Law of our Lord and Prophet Muhamad, that we do with right hold empire over you; wherefore, if ye acknowledge this right and fulfil your obligation towards us, ye shall have peace: but if not, then know of a certainty that we, being aided by the invincible power of God, will make war upon you, to the slaying of yourselves, the destruction of your possessions, and the erasure of all memory of your name from the world: your villages I will burn, and I will lay waste your cities; nor shall there remain a trace of your dwellings or yourselves.

"Know, furthermore, that this letter shall serve as the justification of whatever miseries ye may hereafter be afflicted withal, seeing that ye have thereby timely warning of what it behoves you to do, and it is well averred that he who first gives warning disculpates himself from the blame of such suffering as may follow the neglect of that warning.

"And now we salute you, in so far as the law permits that we salute you, but it doth not permit or allow us to give you the salutation of friendship."

El Hedaiki informs us that the victories of that Muhamad Ben Abdallah, called El Mehedi, caused much anxiety to King Aly Ben Juzef, who became sorrowful and dejected, because he could in no way still the desire for vengeance

with which his heart was tormented. His imagination was constantly occupied with plans for defeating and destroying his enemy; no long time elapsed, therefore, before he had again assembled an army wherewith to proceed against him. He wrote letters at the same time, exhorting all such of the tribes as were not in a state of rebellion to take arms against the insurgents who were thus disturbing the peace of the land.

On the 3rd of the moon Xaban, in the year 516, a new host was sent forth by the King, with command to encounter the rebel Almohades, power against power, and the two armies again met in an obstinate battle; but the enemy, who had a large and well-appointed body of horse, again defeated and routed the Almoravide force: then the royal troops became possessed with such terror of the lately despised foe as to remain astonished, no longer daring to await the encounter of the rebels, insomuch that the triumph of El Mehedi knew no bounds. A conviction had in effect begun to gain ground among the Almoravide soldiery that the contest in which they were then engaged would end unhappily for themselves, and bring about the exaltation of their opponents.

El Zuhairri, who was at that moment in Morocco, informs us that he saw a brilliant force march against the rebel Almohades, who were then in the mountains, and that this army was commanded by Abu Tahir Temim, brother to the King. He tells us further, that the large host he describes ascended the heights to seek the enemy, when, being at the foot of those hills wherein the people of Mehedi were entrenched, Prince Temim arranged his bands with consummate ability, giving orders for the ascent of the mountain by divers paths; but that by the time they had attained the most difficult asperities of the region, they were overtaken by the night, and not knowing whither they were proceeding, the troops began to fall into disorder, when large numbers lost their footing and fell over the precipices, where infantry and cavalry alike met their death. He adds that the army being thus conquered without fighting, or even seeing their opponent, but a few of the number sent forth returned to Morocco. This misfortune befel the troops at a place called Quieg: and the Almohades, descending from their fastnesses

of rock, pursued the remains of the force which had continued to keep together under the guidance of Prince Temim, until they arrived at the Sierra of Virikua,* where the rebels were met by the Almoravide general, Yetti of Lamtuna, who had come forth from Medina Agmat to the succour of his brethren, in defence of whom he now fought valiantly: but his people were finally defeated and routed, the general himself dying in the battle, with many of the nobles of Agmat who had joined his banners.

After this victory El Mehedi left the mountains, and returned to Tinmaul, where he determined to fix his residence; the strength of the fortress, with the character of its site, being calculated to resist whatever force might be sent against him. When he had thus chosen his abode, he distributed the lands and houses among his companions, his next care being to surround the city with strong walls, which he furnished with numerous and lofty towers. On a height which rises above and commands the place, he then built a citadel, having walls of extraordinary strength; and from that high summit he not only dominated the city, with the hill on which it stands, but also the plains lying on the farther side of the same, insomuch that Tinmaul is considered to be surpassed in strength by no city yet known. No man can enter the place, whether on foot or horseback, save only by two gates—the one to the East and the other to the West, that last being in the direction towards Morocco. The entrance by either way is through a narrow path, which finally becomes so difficult that it does not permit the passage even of horses; and all who would enter the city must alight, nay, must proceed with great care, lest he fall into the abyss beneath. This narrow way hath been formed by the hand and cut in the hard rock, having the precipitous descent of the precipice or abyss before mentioned on one side, and high overhanging rocks, with deep clefts therein, on the other. From time to time the traveller finds this narrow way interrupted by the beds of torrents which descend from the summit, and these are strewn with large masses of rock. Bridges of wood are thrown over these clefts and torrents, but they are so disposed as to be

* Which is situate to the south of Agmat.—*Condé.*

easily removed if need be, when that fearful path becomes wholly impassable; nor can he who hath then advanced upon it either go forward or turn back. The length of each of these narrow paths is a day's journey; and the city itself is situate in the rudest part of the mountains of Duren, or Doren, which are sierras that extend from the Western Sea of Africa to the Mountains of Telencen, where they are joined by other chains, and these, divided into numerous branches, stretch to Cabis and Hamano which is beyond Trabolos, the journey through them requiring two months for its completion.

Having thus strongly fortified the City of Tinmaul, Mohamad Ben Abdallah, called El Mehedi, sent his forces to make incursions on the country. These troops, descending from their mountains like the impetuous torrents of winter, poured their rude hordes over the towns and territories of King Aly, carrying devastation and death to all they found, and keeping the people in continual disquietude with their robberies and violence. The unhappy dwellers in the district then complained of their perils and losses to the King, whom they implored to free them from their cruel enemies. Aly Ben Juzef had already expended large sums in the assembling of armies wherewith to restrain the rebels; and being himself earnestly desirous to put an end to their aggressions and prevent them from descending the mountains, he held counsel with his generals as to the best means whereby the men might be attacked in their fortresses, and shut up in their nest of Tinmaul.

King Aly was then given to understand that there was in his prisons a youth of Andalusian race, called Faleki, a bold man, and of great ability, who had been a renowned robber on the highways, though very young. They added that this man was not an unlikely person to accomplish the wishes of his majesty, or to contrive some means for the furtherance thereof. The King then pardoned the robber, and commanded him to consider the best means for proceeding in that matter, giving power to adopt the necessary measures for restraining the predatory bands of El Mehedi.

Faleki accordingly made all needful observations, and

causing a fortress to be constructed at the point which he considered favourable for the purpose, he garrisoned the same with a carefully selected body of cavalry and good crossbowmen. With these he then assailed the Almohades in the defiles of their mountains, and attacking them as they proceeded from, or returned to, their haunts, he took them in the narrow ravines, and inflicted on them so many defeats that they were at length compelled to desist from further aggression: when the plain country was thus delivered from the perpetual disquietude and plunder to which its inhabitants had been subjected.

CHAP. XXVIII.—Wherein the subject of the preceding chapter is continued.

Three years did El Mehedi remain in Tinmaul without descending from the city, except for some few short incursions which he made on the subjects of King Aly Ben Juzef; but his pride and vanity would then no longer permit him to remain shut up, and the rather as he knew that his name had become known and feared in consequence of his extraordinary victories, and the success of those forces which had suffered no check, nor endured any important defeat. He thus considered it advisable now to embolden himself, and go forth openly against the King Aly, whom he determined to besiege in his very Court of Morocco.

With this intent he wrote to the tribes who had placed themselves in his obedience, commanding them to unite their forces with those which he had at Tinmaul; whereupon there presently assembled an innumerable multitude from all parts, insomuch that El Mehedi saw himself at the head of a force which counted no less than forty thousand men, who were for the greater part infantry; but he had also a good provision of arms and horses. He appointed the Xeque Abu Muhamad El Baxir, one of the ten men of his immediate followers, to be the general of those troops, and commanded him to proceed against Morocco; this Muhamad Ben Abdallah, called El Mehedi, having now formed the firm determination to make himself master of the

Empire of Africa. Yet he did not himself accompany the army, being at that time sick and ill at ease.

Abu Muhamad marched on Morocco accordingly, as commanded by his Imaum; and being joined on his way by the people of Agmat, with those from the Cabilas of Hesraga, Chesm, and some others, his forces were thereby largely increased.

King Aly, on his part, having assembled an army of ten thousand men, foot and horse, the opposing bands encountered each other near Morocco, when the Almoravides, confiding in their great numbers, commenced the attack. But it was the will of God that they should be defeated with a cruel carnage, and, turning their backs on the foe, they fled, amid the swords of the Almohades waving over their heads, and the lances of those rebels tinging their points in their shoulders, the flight and pursuit continuing even to the gates of the city.

Great was the number of the Almoravides who there died the death of the sword; and not in the battle only, but in the pursuit, and even to their entrance into Morocco. The Almohades then besieged the capital, resolved that they would never strike their tents until they had obtained possession of the place, or had died in the attempt. The Almoravides, on their part, sallied forth, and gave them many surprises; sanguinary skirmishes ensued, wherein both sides fought with implacable rage and hatred, the field remaining covered with corpses—a savoury feast for the beasts and birds of prey. There were some forty thousand horsemen in the city at the commencement of the siege, with a multitude of crossbowmen and foot-soldiers beyond count; but every day diminished and weakened their numbers.

Now among the garrison of the besieged there was a cavalier of Andalusia called Abdallah Ben Humusqui, who was captain of a hundred Andalusian soldiers, and belonged to the command of the General Abu Ishak. This cavalier being one day in the presence-chamber, with other captains and generals, discoursing of the war, and of their sallies against the enemies, said to Aly Ben Juzef, "There is nothing, O King, which renders men so contemptible in the eyes of their foes as that which we are now doing—keeping ourselves shut up tamely within the walls of the

city." The king laughed at his words, reflecting that the youth did not well consider wherefore he, who had so frequently been routed in the field, should be compelled to content himself with that method of defence. The General Abu Mohamad, who likewise considered the remark of the young captain a light one, replied with a smile, "Abu Abdallah thinks fighting with the Almoravides to be like a contest with the Christians." But the Andalusian made answer and said, "Not so, since I have fought against the one and the other, and have even led the men of Masamuda, who are now our adversaries; but it is a truth that we shall make but small progress in our affairs if we continue to sit still as we have hitherto done. Choose from the force a body of marksmen, among whom we have many of great dexterity, but let them not be too numerous, lest they hinder each other: these should sally forth between a chosen force of cavalry; and what I would beg for myself is that you would give me three hundred Andalusians, with a certain number of good marksmen, whom I will choose, and you shall see that I am right in what I say."

The king having acceded to the request of Abu Abdallah, that captain then chose the three hundred men whom he had required, and having remarked that the Almohades used very long lances, with which they wounded their enemy from afar, he commanded his people to shorten their weapons to such an extent that none exceeded the length of six cubits. Thus disposed, the men selected by Abu Abdallah marched out before the dawn, and just as day was about to appear they attacked the Almohades in their tents, wherein they held them as it were besieged, and before the day was half spent the leader returned to the city with the heads of three hundred Almohades in his possession.

This exploit was very much applauded; it put courage into the hearts of the besieged, and the king with his generals perceiving that their foe was not invincible, gave orders for a general assemblage of the forces, resolving to give the enemy battle. The command was entrusted to the Xeque Abu Muhamad Ben Bannadin, and on the morning of the day following that of Abu Abdallah's success, the army of Aly Ben Juzef marched forth. The strife was

a cruel and desperate one, but the Almoravides conducted themselves so valiantly as utterly to defeat the Almohades, whom they drove in confusion to their tents, while the victors, entering with them, filled the whole camp with terror and dismay. In that combat forty thousand Masamudes lost their lives, scarcely four hundred men of all the force escaping, and even to assemble that number it was necessary to count both foot and horse.

On that terrible day there died the Xeque and general of the Almohades, Abu Muhamad Baxir, who was one of the Decemviri of El Mehedi. There would not indeed have remained a single man of all their host had it not been for the efforts made by that brave and prudent leader, Abdelmumen, who exhibited on that occasion the most heroic valour, as well as a steadiness and forethought which were admitted on all sides to be most admirable. He it was who found means to withdraw the poor relics of the army from that place of death. But the Almoravides pursued the few who had made good their retreat from the camp, even to Medina Agmat, and in that flight there perished five more of El Mehedi's council of ten, all fighting like raging lions that have been driven by the ardent hunters to their last hold.

When El Mehedi received intelligence of that fearful defeat he seemed to pay no regard to what his people were relating, and only exclaimed, "But Abdelmumen is not dead?" and when they replied that he was not, he said, "It is well! since Abdelmumen lives our empire shall still endure!"

It was nevertheless manifest that the sight of the battered remnants of his late victorious army, returning in so deplorable a condition, caused El Mehedi heavy sorrow; his sickness was much increased by the pain thereof, and the troops under his command were suffered to remain long inactive, without once leaving the enclosures of Tinmaul. The defeat of El Mehedi's forces took place in the year 519, and on that occasion the Cabilas of Hinteta, Ganfysa, Hezama, and others, which had joined him in his rebellion, returned to their allegiance, submitting themselves once more to their King, even Aly Ben Juzef.

CHAP. XXIX.—Of the campaign of aben radmir in andalusia.

These troubles and insurrections keeping the king's attention fixed on the affairs of Africa, had prevented him from giving due regard to those of Spain, where his generals had maintained the war on the frontiers with varying fortunes; wherefore, with the arrival of the year 519, there came to Morocco the Cadilcoda of Andalusia, Abul Belit Ben Ruxd, a person of so much authority, that to honour him as he merited, King Aly Ben Juzef himself went forth in person to meet and give him welcome. The cause of his coming was an affair of high importance to the state and defence of Andalusia, and this he laid before the king, giving him to understand that the Christians who dwelt as vassals among the Moslemah were holding communication with the Infidel enemy, to whom they made known the condition of the country, and the state of the fortresses, with the distribution and all the dispositions of the same; those traitors soliciting their brethren, moreover, to enter the land and attack the Faithful, thus failing in their duty as vassals, and breaking the oaths they had sworn to observe. The Cadilcoda added that the Christians not only assisted and excited their fellow-worshippers in secret, as described, but that in the various incursions, pursuits, battles, and skirmishes, they found means to give them essential aid, serving them as guides, making known to them whatever intelligence could best avail their purposes, and forwarding the views of the enemy in every manner that they could devise.

When King Aly heard these things he was much surprised, and considering the gravity of the case, he took counsel with his Viziers, Alimes, and Xeques, as to the means to be adopted for putting an end to that connection between the Christian enemy and the Moslemah vassals, since it was above all things essential to cut short the progress of an evil resulting in such serious injury to the land. The resolution at which, by the advice of his council, he finally arrived was this: he wrote to the Walies of every city and fortress in Andalusia, commanding them to withdraw the Christian vassals from the frontier with the utmost

secrecy and care, placing them in the interior of Andalusia, and dispersing them among the Moslemah of the country. They were furthermore to take such Christians as could be proved to have incited the Infidel to enter the country, or were suspected of having aided those of their Law, and to drive them together from all parts of Andalusia. They were then to dispatch them at once into Africa, compelling them to sell or even to abandon the possessions which they held in Andalusia, seeing that they were for the future to live and remain by compulsion in Africa, or whatever other country the king might be pleased to assign them for their future dwelling-place.

That command was immediately obeyed, and many Christians were consequently dispatched to the confines of Mekenesa, Sale, and other Comarcas, not a few of their number dying of the change from their own climate and air to that of Africa. The principal cause of this resolution against the Christians was the campaign which Aben Radmir of Aragona had made on the territories of Andalusia, and wherein he could not have succeeded had he not been invited by those of his Law, who had even entreated him to appear in their favour, assuring him that he might easily make himself master of the entire country: and the matter had taken place after this manner. The Christians who were dwellers among the Moslemah in the kingdom of Granada sent letters to Aben Radmir in secret, requesting him to enter the country for their deliverance, and promising to make him master of those mountainous districts, with all the coast of Granada. They were very earnest in these entreaties, yet Aben Radmir, either because he had not his preparations made, or that he was doubtful of those traitor Muhahidines,* and could not trust their word, did not make that incursion on the land which they had desired; wherefore, as they perceived his distrust or want of resolution, they increased their incitements and promises, making themselves ready to give active aid, and even agreeing to

* Muhahidines. As the Christian inhabitants living under the Moslemah rule in Toledo were called Muzarabes or Muzarabians, so were those resident in other cities of the empire called Muhahidines.

serve him publicly. To this end they got together twelve thousand carefully chosen and valiant men, giving Aben Radmir to understand that these were all persons known to the chiefs of the party, and taken from the inhabitants of a very few cities, but that if he would consent to appear among them, many thousands of their numbers now living scattered among the towns of Andalusia would raise their heads at the instant when they should see themselves supported by his powerful arms, and all united would assist him to make himself lord of those rich and fertile territories.

They then added an extensive and very remarkable description of the whole land, its mountains, valleys, rivers, and streams; they dwelt on the abundance of its fruits and garden products, describing the rich meadows for the pasture of innumerable flocks and herds, with the vast numbers of animals for the chase, whether beast or bird. Neither did they forget to expatiate on the beautiful situation of their city of Granada, and the strength of its Alkazaba,* but most of all did they insist on the unity of mind with which all the Christian vassals of the Moslemah were resolved to assist King Aben Radmir in the conquest of the city, when they could thence proceed to make him master of many other strong places: Granada being the Alcazar and key of defence of the whole extent of that well-endowed and fortunate land.

All these incitements and promises at length determined Aben Radmir, and he resolved on the incursion they desired. Having assembled his troops the king chose four thousand cavaliers, whom he caused to swear that they would follow his banner to the death, and never turn their backs upon the enemy, but either conquer or die.

Aben Radmir then marched forth with his people and repaired to Saragossa, but concealed his purpose carefully from the Moslemah dwelling there, and in the end of the moon Xaban, in the year 519, he left that city, proceeding to Valencia, where the Xeque, Abu Muhamad Yedar Ben Birca, was then Wali, and held the town with a good garrison of Almoravides. Here Aben Radmir made halt for some

* Citadel.

days, and attacked the place with his wonted vigour, but effected nothing of any importance, and having laid waste the Comarca, he broke up his camp. Many of the Muhahidines then joined his force,—a thing which encouraged him to press forward; those traitors serving him as guides, and supplying all needful information on the way. Among other matters, they advised him of such points as he might spoil and devastate to his advantage, warning him of all those where it would be well that he should refrain from doing so.

Thus conducted, the Christian king arrived before Gezira Xucar, the fortress of which he assaulted several times, but could not take it, and lost many of his cross-bearing followers in the attempt. From that place he proceeded to Denia, making a fierce attack upon the city in the Easter of Alfitra at the close of Ramazan; but here also he was repulsed, and after unavailing combats with the garrison of Denia, he next passed by the Fax of Xativa to the territory of Murcia, laying the country waste in his progress. By Guadilmansora, he repaired to Burxana, and subsequently turned towards Nahar Taxila; an incursion which occupied him eight days. Thence the Christian monarch departed for Medina Baza, to which city he laid siege, and the city being without walls, he expected no difficulty in making good his entrance; but the inhabitants defended themselves with so much bravery that Aben Radmir was compelled to desist from his attempt, after he had suffered a considerable loss of his people.

On the first Juma in the moon of Dylcada, the Christian king reached Badiaza, where he made a furious attack on the fortress from the side of the Almicabira; but here too he lost his time and soldiers vainly; finding which, and having remained before the place until the following Monday, he then departed to a town called Sérida: there he laid an ambush into which he hoped to attract the defenders of the place; but as these had received warning, his cares were again rendered useless,—the inhabitants would not come forth from their town, nor could the Christians venture to enter it.

On the Wednesday following Aben Radmir passed on to another town, called Gayana, which he attacked with good

hope of taking it, since there were many traitor Muhahidines therein. Nay, these came forth with horse and arms to meet the Christians, and there did not remain one of those perjured vassals in all the Comarcas who was not in haste now to discover himself and join the King Aben Radmir. He, therefore, seeing that his army was here daily increased by the arrival of new troops, remained in Gayana about a month, as we are told by the author of the Bargeliya.* At this place it was that the secret negociations and plots of the Andalusian Christians were brought to light, more especially those which had been entered into by the men of Granada.

The Wali of that city, informed of their dispositions, took much pains to assure himself of the persons of those traitors, but he found them to be in such vast numbers that he determined to suspend the measures he had taken, lest he should drive them to further acts of rebellion, or to an open declaration of their purposes, when they would all have given aid and favour to those of their Law. He therefore appeared to content himself with their deceptive promises of fidelity, although he did not believe in any of them, but set himself to fortify the city, and make all needful preparations for the defence, well convinced that he would find more difficulty in delivering himself from the Muhahidines within, than from the Christians of Aben Radmir without. Those traitorous Infidels were in fact now hastening from all parts to join themselves to the army of the Christian king.

The Wali of Andalusia at that time was Abu Tahir Temim, brother of the King Aly Ben Juzef; the Prince held his court in Granada, but had passed over to Africa a short time previously for the purpose of assisting with his counsels in the war then waged by his brother against El Mehedi. Now, however, being informed of the perilous condition of things in Andalusia, he returned thither with a large body of cavalry, which, added to the troops he already possessed, constituted a very powerful army. This the Prince Temim determined to encamp in the immediate neighbourhood of Granada, extending his lines entirely around the city, which thus remained within them as in a circle.

On his part Aben Radmir left Gayana with his troops,

* Bargeliya; the clearness or lustre of the lightning.—*Condé.*

which were now very numerous, and fixed his camp in the hamlet of Degma, which is near Granada. He had more than fifty thousand men, the greater part cavalry, and that powerful army filled the inhabitants of the city with dread, neither could they believe themselves secure, although they knew the number and strength of the forces assembled in their defence. The Azala of terror* was made in all the mosques; but it is true that the people hurried rather to their arms than to the prayer: the ceremony was nevertheless continued in Granada even to the day of Id Annaherii or the Easter of Victims, called also the Easter of Lambs.

Aben Radmir subsequently moved his camp to the bank of the river Ferdex, and thence to the farms of Muzabeca, finally transferring it to those of Nibel; but while in that place there fell great rains and storms of snow, insomuch that he could do nothing to any purpose, and must have perished with all his army had not the Muhahidines hastened to his assistance with provisions. Here he remained during seventeen days, perpetually harassed by the Almoravide skirmishers, who did not cease to beset his camp, now with an onslaught of cavalry, and now with a surprise from their foot-soldiers. This state of things caused the Christian king to lose all hope of possessing Granada, and he saw that his incursion had been a rash resolve, the hope of success held out to him by the Muhahidines having proved an ill-founded one; wherefore he determined to content himself with the satisfaction of his covetousness, and with the plunder of the country which he could not conquer.

He therefore broke up his camp, first proceeding to the fields of Mersana, which lie towards Venix, whence he continued his way by Zequia, and at the close of evening reached Alcala Yashebi. From this place Aben Radmir

* The Azala of terror is made in cases of danger, as its name implies; the usual ceremonies and prostrations being much curtailed. But it is rarely performed in the mosques, and few attend it, those who do so appearing with arms in their hands, and even stained with blood. The short ceremonies connected with the Azala of terror may also be made wherever the person performing it may chance to find himself at the moment, nor is he held to repair to the mosque for that purpose, if his circumstances render it difficult for him to do so.—*Condé.*

repaired to the hamlet of Luc, but not remaining there, passed on by Vezjana, Vezria, Cabra, and Alixena, constantly followed by the light troops of the Almoravides, who did not leave him an hour of repose. Thus occupied by perpetual attacks on his rear-guard and the flanks of his army, the skirmishes which he was compelled to fight on various parts of his route were frequently very grave, and caused him much loss: by these incessant surprises and onslaughts of the Moslemah, he was also prevented from breaking his order of march for the purposes of devastating the surrounding country, as it had been his intention to do: he proceeded therefore in a condition of much restraint and disquietude. Yet the injuries which he found means to inflict on his passage were neither few nor unimportant.

After this manner, Aben Radmir continued his march until he arrived near Lyrena, where the Moslemah, desiring much to engage the Christian enemy in a pitched battle, made arrangements for a general attack on the vanguard, to be commenced at the dawn of day; this took place accordingly, and such was the impetuosity with which they fell upon their foes, that they threw them into complete disorder, compelling them to abandon their baggage, and leave the provisions of the whole army in the hands of the victors.

But now, believing that they had vanquished and overcome all the Misbelievers, the Moslemah conquerors began to feast on the prey, and occupied themselves in gathering the spoil; wherefore Aben Radmir, advised of their employment, by the fugitives of the vanguard, placed his main body in order of battle, and attacking the disarranged force of the Moslemah when they least expected him, with four battalions of horse, he cut down vast numbers of the Faithful, putting the rest to flight, and pursuing them until nightfall deprived him of the power to distinguish friend from foe.

Many noble Moslemah died in that battle, as they endeavoured to reanimate their men, and sought to lead the fugitives back to the strife; nay, the carnage would have been even more complete had it not been late in the afternoon when the troops of Aben Radmir appeared.

It was now the turn of the Moslemah to lose their baggage and provisions, all of which fell into the power of

the Christians, who were then well repaid for the momentary loss and partial plunder of their own munitions.

From this time Aben Radmir directed his march towards the Mediterranean, still followed at a certain distance by companies of the Almoravide troops; but the latter dared no longer attempt to oppose his passage.

We find it related that at the crossing of the river Motril, and when from the marshy fords of that stream the army was traversing the deep ravines which succeeded, Aben Radmir turned to some of the most noble among the cavaliers by whom he was accompanied, and speaking in the Christian tongue, he said, "How magnificent a grave would not this make us, if there were any one on those heights who would throw down earth to cover us." Thenceforward he turned his steps in the direction of Velad, and there, being on the shore of the sea, Aben Radmir caused a small bark to be constructed, which he used for the purpose of taking fish on that strand. This was done either in the accomplishment of a vow which he had made to carry his arms through the Moslemah territory, and even to the coast of Granada, or merely that the thing might be described at a future time as the completion of some great exploit.* King Radmir subsequently ascended towards Granada, and fixed his camp on the farm of Dilar, whence he proceeded to Emidam, and while there he had certain skirmishes with the light cavalry of the Almoravides. A few days later beheld him entering on the Vega of Granada, when he encamped on the sources of the Teja, where the Almoravides did not give him an hour of repose, insomuch that it became needful to entrench and fortify the Christian camp: nor was the fear lest his more open assailants should press within

* In the details of this retreat there is a manifest obscurity which would most probably have been elucidated by a note, had the careful and accurate author been permitted to see his work through the press. In default of this it may be added here that certain writers declare the Christian king to have promised the generals of his immediate suite that they should eat fish taken by themselves from the waters of that region. Hence the construction of the fishing-bark: but we give our readers the assertion for only so much as it may be worth, not having found confirmation of its authenticity in any writer of acknowledged authority. *T.*

his tents, the only motive for that precaution: being now very near the city, where he knew that there was no lack of brave and enterprising cavaliers, Aben Radmir thought it needful to be on his guard that he might not suffer an unforeseen defeat, in consequence of the surprises which the leaders would almost certainly prepare for him.

Having remained for some time within these entrenchments, the Christian king then marched by Lagon to Guadiaxi, where he found a part of his force which he had left in a fortress of that district: next continuing his march through the eastern parts of Spain, he found himself on the road which he had taken in coming, the territory of Murcia and Xativa namely. Up to that time the Almoravides had constantly followed Aben Radmir, without losing sight of his banners, and this they did to prevent his people from making incursions on the neighbouring lands; but they carefully avoided coming to an engagement with the Christian forces.

The most authentic authorities declare that Aben Radmir lost a large part of his host by sickness before regaining his own dominions; the privations and fatigues of that prolonged march having greatly weakened the strength of his men, and the plague, which also appeared among them, carrying off many of those exhausted bands. Seeing that the mortality was increasing, the king made great haste to return to his states: "And of a truth," remarks the author of the 'Lightning,' "if Aben Radmir had some cause to feel vainglorious at the bold enterprise he had accomplished, yet on the other hand it is certain that he did nothing of importance therein; he effected little, in all that painful and perilous march, beyond the burning of certain villages and farms, with the ruin of their miserable inhabitants; but he neither took nor could enter any fortified place, small or great: insomuch that he may be said to have employed the campaign almost wholly in the destruction of peasants and shepherds, farms, hamlets, country-houses, and solitary dwellings of similar kind." "Yet in that enterprise," observes the same author, "the King Aben Radmir expended fifteen months, during which he did the Moslems more good than harm, since he caused them to discover the

existence of enemies among those of their own people, and enabled them to put themselves on their guard against the traitors thus made known to them."

This, then, was the cause which had induced the Cadi Abul Belut Aben Raxid to pass over into Africa, and after consulting the king as to the best means to be adopted for making head against the danger thus menacing the Moslemah in Spain, the Cadi furthermore suggested the expediency of depriving the King of Saragossa of his sovereignty; since he had not only failed to defend his capital, but had formed a confederacy with the Christians, sending presents to the King Aben Radmir, from his friendship with whom infinite evils might redound to the Moslemah of Spain.

The advice given by Abul Belut Aben Raxid in relation to the Sovereign of Saragossa, did not appear to be unacceptable to King Aly Ben Juzef, and he replied, that since Aben Hud had entered into a league with the Christians, he had deserved to lose his kingdom, for which cause he gave orders to the effect that the general Abu Bekir Ben Tefelit should march an army into his territories without delay, and take possession of the state in the name of the Ameer Aly Ben Juzef.

CHAP. XXX.—PRINCE TAXFIN, THE SON OF JUZEF, ARRIVES IN SPAIN. HIS VICTORIES. ADVANTAGES GAINED BY THE ALMOHADES IN AFRICA. NATURAL DEATH OF THEIR CHIEF, EL MEHEDI.

WHEN the King of Saragossa was informed of the resolution taken by Aly Ben Juzef, and knew that a force was about to march against him, he wrote a letter to the Ameer, of which the substance was as follows:—

"Thou well knowest, O king! that my father, Almostain Billah, wrote to the King of the Moslemah, Juzef Aben Taxfin, thy father, requiring that he should permit him to remain in quiet possession of his dominions, and requesting that there might be peace and friendship between them, to the end that each might give aid to the other against their common enemy. Conditions being then made, our fathers

remained confederate, nor would ever make war upon each other, for which cause the hearts of their people were permitted to rejoice in that peace which comes from good counsel, and is as the resplendent light which gladdens the life of all men. We too have enjoyed quiet and security, which hath not been troubled on thy part up to this time, although many circumstances have occurred in these states, the unfortunate causes of which I do not myself clearly perceive, unless they have proceeded from evil counsels that may have countervailed thy good intentions; but for some time it is certain, O my Lord! that a malevolent air hath been breathing over the land, or to speak more truly, a hurricane and tempestuous storm hath assailed us which brings us menaces of destruction and dismay. It will not be just that thou shouldst deprive us of our territories and states, since we have constantly maintained the friendliness existing between us—we have never broken the same, even in thought; nor during the period of the involuntary isolation from our brethren in which we have found ourselves, have we in any way infringed upon thy rights, O king! wherefore we could not but consider ourselves as vile and despicable, if we were now to suffer our cities to be taken from us without reason.

"But God will not permit that this rupture shall take place between us, causing such evil and injury to both as would make our common enemy triumph in our misfortunes: we have hitherto maintained the league of friendship entered into by our forefather: whether in public or in private, do not thou, then, give occasion—either by the evil intentions or the ignorance of thy counsellors—for the disturbance of this good harmony; and for myself, God, who is over all, and penetrates the secrets of every heart, knows the purity of mine intentions and my good-will as to thee ward. None can impede the fulfilment of that which God hath determined, but the day will come when the unjust provoker of evil and of the sorrows of war shall appear in his true light; God, who is the Judge and Righteous Rewarder of those who do evil, shall then decide between us and those who seek to put discord and strife between thee and me. I repeat, that God is a Just Judge: and herewith I bid thee farewell.'

When this letter, written by Abu Meruan Aben Hud, reached the hands of Aly Ben Juzef, the latter changed his purpose, and commanded the general Abu Bekir Aben Tefelit to discontinue his preparations for entering on the territories of Saragossa, which he ordered him to leave undisturbed.

About that time the King Alv was much occupied with the fortifications of his city of Morocco, which he surrounded by forts and strong walls, amply supplied with high towers. He commenced the construction of these works in the moon of Giumada Primera and the year 520, and expended on them seventy thousand mitcals of gold. That beautiful and durable erection was completed in about eight months, the masonry being such, that, when finished, it proved to be one of the finest structures in the world. King Aly also built the great mosque, with its lofty tower and Almimbar.

In this year of 520 the king's brother, Abu Tahir Temim, who had been his Naib or vicegerent in Spain, departed to the mercy of Allah: he died in Andalusia, and that event caused infinite sorrow to Aly Ben Juzef, seeing that Prince Temim had ever been his most faithful friend and counsellor in all the great cares of his reign, consoling him amidst all his troubles, which were very heavy, nay, even almost continuous: it was on him indeed that King Aly reposed all the cares of government as regarded the Spanish provinces. Prince Temim died in the city of Granada, and was buried there with much honour. In his place the king sent his son Taxfin, who passed over to Spain with five thousand Almoravide horse. Having assembled a sufficient force, the Ameer Taxfin then directed his march on the territory of Toledo, which he laid waste, and taking the fortress of Hacena by storm, he devastated the whole surrounding country.

Nor were the Christians idle on their part: they gathered a large army from Gallicia and Castile, the Christian nobles aiding their kings with all their strength, all proposing to fall upon the land of Algarve. When their banners were assembled, the Infidel host was found to amount to many thousand men, and with these they entered the territory of Merida, burning the towns, putting the inhabitants to death, and driving off the flocks.

The Ameer Taxfin hurried to the protection of the country with his Almoravides, and arriving in the vicinity of Badajoz, the two armies met near the renowned battle-field of Zalacca, where the grandfather of Prince Taxfin had before defeated the Christian foe. When he found himself in face of his enemy, Taxfin, though still very young, arranged his order of battle with great ability and intelligence: he disposed his cavalry and marksmen in closely compact and well-placed divisions, himself, with the principal Xeques and generals, retaining the command of the main body. The army of the Faithful bore very beautiful banners, which they carried aloft on their long staves, those of the Almoravides being of pure white, with the motto "*Le illa Allah, le gallid illa Allah.*" The two wings were formed by the Andalusians and by certain Cabilas of Africa, the right being occupied by the Spanish cavaliers with their richly tinted pennons, also very beautiful; nor were those of the left wing inferior, whether in hue or splendour, and these last waved over the tribes of Zeneta, Haxima, and other Cabilas.

The two armies commenced their movement amidst the loud alarm of Atambours and trumpets; the battle was quickly begun with terrible impetuosity and fearful cries; it continued through a great part of the day with nearly equal fortune on both sides, but at the hour of Adobar the Christians began to yield, and Taxfin, perceiving this, rode eagerly among his people on all sides, fighting in his own person with admirable valour. The Moslemah becoming aware of the advantage they were obtaining, then proclaimed the victory as if already obtained, and this dismayed the hearts of the foe, on whom the Faithful now fell with renewed energy, until at length they drove them from the field, when a flight commenced which soon ended in disorderly rout. The field of battle remained covered with corpses, an acceptable feast to the beasts and birds of prey; but the carnage was furthermore increased by the eagerness of the pursuit, which was continued by the Moslemah until deep in the night. This great battle was fought at Fohos-Assehab, and Prince Taxfin returning to Cordova, thence wrote to his father an account of that fortunate event, which took place in the year 520.

No long time elapsed, nevertheless, before the Christians again returned with a powerful host, when, directing their march towards the mountains of Caraz, they made a cruel slaughter on the towns, and plundered the fields of their flocks, the unhappy dwellers flying before them in terror, and taking refuge among the impassable defiles of the hills. When Prince Taxfin received intelligence of these things, he convoked his counsel, and inquired of the generals composing it if they did not think it time to go forth against the enemy and protect the frontiers. To this the Xeques of the African Cabilas replied:—"My Lord, either the kingdom is ours, and we mean to hold it, or we must be willing to abandon it to the Christians; if it be ours, then is it fully time for us to defend it, not regarding the perils or difficulties which we may encounter in doing so, but if we abandon the same, be sure that God will not fail to demand an account thereof at our hands."

The prince then consulted the Andalusians, who replied, "This war is one of so much right and justice, that we would fain have thee send us alone to wage it, since none would then take share in our glory."

Finally, the young commander desired to know the mind of the Zenetes and Haximes, for the enterprise was likely to be a difficult and perilous one, when the men of those tribes made answer in these words, "To arms, my lord! and all we ask from thee is this, that if we should die in the battle, thou wilt regard our orphans as a father, and care for them accordingly."

Seeing the excellent dispositions of his people, the prince commended their zeal, and assured them that he hoped and expected nothing less than a glorious victory for the Mosleman arms. He prepared to set forth accordingly, and conducted by their scouts and spies, the generals marched confidently to seek their foe.

Now the Christians were labouring to fortify themselves in Gebel el Cazar, and it was not without extreme difficulty that the Moslemah gained the summit of the mountain; but that done, a sanguinary battle ensued, when the Christian force, not being able to maintain itself in order, began to take flight among those fearful precipices, over the rocks of which no small number of them were hurled to

their fate. Yet the difficulty of the pursuit caused the carnage made among them to be much less than it would have been had the asperities of the ground been less insuperable. The Christians abandoned their baggage and tents, with the flocks they had driven off, and the captives they had taken; the Moslemah then breaking the bonds of thousands of the latter, whom they found chained together in bodies of fifty. Another result of this brilliant victory was the recovery of some thirty of the most important fortresses in Spain, and that circumstance Prince Taxfin added to the account of his successes, which he instantly despatched to the King his father.

In Africa, meanwhile, three years had passed in quietude, because Mohamad Abdallah, called El Mehedi, did not consider his forces sufficiently recovered to make it safe for them to leave the walls of Tinmaul and the heights of their rocky fastness: but that time elapsed, he recommenced his aggressions with increased fury. El Mehedi appointed Abdelmumen Ben Aly, his friend and Vizier, to be Imaum of Azala, and despatched him to the territory of Morocco at the head of thirty thousand men, with whom he was commanded to ravage that district. Abdelmumen then found means to recover to the allegiance of El Mehedi those Cabilas which had returned to the rule of Aly Ben Juzef,—the tribes of Hinteta, Ganfysa, and Hezama, namely, with some others; he added much to the strength of his army by that circumstance, and thus reinforced, pressed forward even to the vicinity of Medina Agmat.

The Ameer Abu Bekir, son of King Aly, went forth to the encounter of Abdelmumen with a powerful host, composed of the Cabilas of Lamtuna, Zanhaga, Haxima, and other Almoravide tribes, when there ensued many battles and sanguinary skirmishes, which endured for the space of eight days: but at length God lent His aid to the Almohades, by whom the Almoravides were broken and defeated, Abdelmumen pursuing the discomfited army with a fearful slaughter through the whole province, until he drove the shattered remains thereof into Morocco, and compelled them to shut themselves up within its walls. The successful leader then sat down before the city; but, striking his camp at the end of three days, he suddenly returned to Tinmaul.

The successes thus obtained by Abdelmumen Ben Aly took place in the moon of Regeb and the year 524.

When the victorious Almohades approached Tinmaul, El Mehedi went forth in person to meet and receive them, and having made himself minutely acquainted with their exploits and conquests, he first expressed his approbation of the valour and steadiness they had displayed, bestowing on all high praises; and that done, he gave them to know that he had commanded all the people to assemble in the mosque and on the public square, seeing that he then proposed to take his final leave of them.

All were greatly surprised by this resolution, since none could believe it possible that their leader would abandon them; many also became very sorrowful at hearing that announcement, because they feared lest the increasing infirmities of El Mehedi, which they had not failed to remark, should cause his farewell to be that which men take when they are departing for the other world.

The people having all assembled as they had been commanded to do, El Mehedi appeared among them, preaching to the multitude, and exhorting them to believe in one sole God, since that was the duty of every created being from the moment he held the command of his reason. He bade them love the Lord their God with all their mind and with all their hearts, enjoined them to call on His Name daily, entreating him to aid and maintain them by His mercy in the keeping of the Faith, and imploring Him to that end in these words:

"O Lord God! Allah the most merciful, Thou who knowest our sins, do Thou pardon them; Thou who knowest our wants, do Thou satisfy them; our enemies are known to Thee, do Thou avert from us the evils that they may prepare for us; Thou shalt suffice to us, since Thou art our Lord; Thou alone shalt suffice to us, since Thou art our Protector, as well as our Creator."

After these admonitions and good counsels to his people, El Mehedi added that he was now about to take leave of them for ever, since he must very soon die. All wept bitter tears at hearing these words; but he consoled them, and bade them conform to the will of God, who disposeth

all for his creatures as is best for them; and therewithal he dismissed them; but they went away in great sadness. The malady of El Mehedi then continued to increase, until he passed to the mercy of God,—an event which took place on Thursday, the 25th* of the moon Ramazan, in the year 524.

It was rumoured that El Mehedi had been advised of his approaching death, by a personage unknown, eight-and-twenty days before its occurrence; and during all his sickness, public prayer was made for him in the mosque by his Vizier and friend, Abdelmumen Ben Aly. When he felt that his death was now at hand, he called Abdelmumen to his presence, and laid on him various injunctions, committing to his charge the Book Algefer, which he had himself received from the Imaum Abu Hamid Algazali. He furthermore directed Abdelmumen Ben Aly as to the ceremonies of his funeral, and mentioned even the linen for his shroud, requiring his friend to wash his corpse with his own hands, and not to permit him to be buried in any vestments but the shroud specified by himself. Abdelmumen was furthermore exhorted to make the Azala or prayer for his departed master; and finally El Mehedi commanded his Vizier to conceal his death for some few days, or until he, Abdelmumen Ben Aly, had sufficiently spoken with the people in his own name. All these commands were fulfilled and accomplished with the utmost exactitude, and as he had desired.

The death of El Mehedi was lamented by all his followers, but more than any other by Abdelmumen Ben Aly, who had lived so long in his company;—from that time, namely, when, but a very young boy, he went to the school of Tahara, a small hamlet in the district of Hanciz, whither he was sent by his father, Aly Ben Yali Ben Meruan, to the end that he might learn to read in the mosque of that place. When El Mehedi afterwards returned from the East, moreover, and had met the youth Abdelmumen with his uncle, as before related, he had instantly selected him, being moved

* Or, as Yahye Ben Ahmed Ben Omeira informs us, on the 14th of that month.—*Condé.*

to that choice by certain indications of ability and good disposition which he perceived in him, to be his Vizier; from which time Abdelmumen had ever been the person in whom he had most implicitly confided. Thus the latter was with reason very sorrowful at his departure, and mourned deeply for the loss of his friend. The death of El Mehedi took place at the hour of dawn.

In person the departed ruler was of middle stature, dark olive complexion, and almost beardless face; his hair was black, and he had fine eyes. Very severe, or rather cruel, in disposition, he was a pitiless shedder of human blood, whether of his enemies or those living beneath his own rule: when he desired to put any man to death with more than common severity, it was his custom to have him interred alive. In battle, El Mehedi was wont to animate his people to the fight with the following words,—"Oh, Almohades, ye are the army of God; ye are the defenders of God's law, and His truth: wherefore, to such of you as may remain dead on the field of battle there shall be given rewards of such exquisite delight, that ear hath not heard, and eyes have not seen, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive them."

El Mehedi had enjoined on his people a very simple expression of faith and form of prayer, insomuch that their Azala, being made without any Arrakea or prostration, was readily performed at all times—on the march as they proceeded, or even in the midst of the battle; by which means he avoided the loss of much time.

CHAP. XXXI.—Of the origin of El Mehedi, and of the election of his successor, Abdelmumen ben Aly ben Yali ben Meruan.

According to Abu Aly Ben Raxid, El Mehedi derived his descent from Abu Talib, the uncle of the Prophet; and Abu Cutham attributes to him the same origin. Abu Meruan, a son of the author of "El Salat," and who subsequently abridged that work, says that the name of E. Mehedi was Muhamad, that the additional name of Abu Abdallah was

adopted by himself; his father was called Thumur, or, as we find recorded among the men of Barbary, likewise Enigar, and, as his office was to give light, or rather to kindle the same, in the mosque, he was called, by way of by-name, Asifu, which in their tongue signifies light.

The name of El Mehedi was not assumed by Muhamad Abu Abdallah until he had begun to gather followers, and had caused the people to assemble around him by his preaching and the novelty of his doctrines; nay, he did not take it until he was already at the head of a large body of men, all obeying him as their lord.

Aben Cutham, discoursing of the origin and history of El Mehedi, relates that he was born in the village of Herga, which is in the district of Sus Alaksa, and that in the year 500 he proceeded to Andalusia, commencing the study of the Sciences in the city of Cordova. Having completed the course prescribed, he then took ship at Almeria, and departed for the East, where he became a disciple of the Imaum Abu Abdallah El Hadrami. In Cairo he attended the lectures of the Imaum Abul Walid of Tortosa, and in Bagdad he studied under the great philosopher Abu Hamid Algezali, author of the book called "Hiiao Ulumi-Edinni," in which he hath taught many things that are contrary to the orthodox opinions. That book was rejected by the Academy of Cordova, after its doctrines had been well examined by that body. The first who reproved and condemned the same was the Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova, even Ahmed Ben Hamdin, who pronounced them to be heretical; and such was his zeal, that he used all the authority he possessed for the purpose of procuring the punishment as a heretic of the author himself, even Abu Hamid Algezali: he likewise gave an account of the book to the King Aly Ben Juzef, by whom the condemnation of the work of the Eastern philosopher was fully approved and sanctioned. King Aly furthermore commanded that all books written by that author which could be found in Spain and Africa should be publicly burnt; nay, the same command was transmitted throughout all his dominions with so much care, that the most rigorous penalties were denounced against every man who should keep the work in his possession, or teach the doctrines contained therein;

these things were done, to the end that no memory of those errors should be suffered to remain.

The author of "El Salat" affirms that many considered the ruin of the Moslemah of the West to have proceeded from, and been occasioned by, that condemnation of the works of Abu Hamid Algazali; and in respect of that matter he relates the following circumstance:—

At the city of Bagdad, where Algazali was then teaching, there arrived a man without a beard, who one day entered his school with a linen cap on his head. Algazali instantly remarking the man, whom he perceived to be a foreigner, fixed his eyes on him earnestly, and demanded, "Of what land art thou?" To which the stranger replied, that he was of Sus Alaksa in the West. Then Algazali enquired if he had not been in the school of Cordova, the best in the world: to which the foreigner made answer in the affirmative: being furthermore questioned respecting certain among the most famous doctors of that school, and replying to those questions with prompt intelligence, Abu Hamid Algazali finally enquired if the stranger had seen his book "Of the Resurrection of the Sciences and the Law;" to which the latter also making answer affirmatively, Algazali next desired to know what was said of that work in Cordova and other lands of the West.

To that last question the foreigner did not dare to reply; but his embarrassment and the reserve he maintained having excited the curiosity of Algazali, the latter insisted that he should relate to him with freedom what was said in relation to the book, and what had happened in the matter. Then the stranger declared exactly what had occurred,—that the book of Abu Hamid had been pronounced heretical namely, and publicly burnt in Cordova, after a minute examination by the doctors of the Academy, and when great consultation had been held by those sages in respect of the tenets inculcated therein. He added that this sentence had been executed by order of the King Aly Ben Juzef, not in Cordova only but also in Morocco, Medina Fez, Ciarwan, and many other academies of the West.

Hearing this, Abu Hamid Algazali changed colour, and extending his hands towards heaven, he made prayer to God with trembling lips, against the advisers of that condemna-

tion, and against the king who had commanded his books to be burnt. At the end of this orison all the disciples of Algazali exclaimed, "Amen."

Those who were present at the prayer inform us that the words relating to the king were as follows: "O God, my Lord, tear to pieces and destroy his kingdom as he hath destroyed my books, and take from him all the lordships of his inheritance." Furthermore we find it related that the stranger who had declared the condemnation of Abu Hamid's works, and who was no other than Muhamad Abu Abdallah El Mehedi, standing in the midst of the disciples, then made answer and said, "Oh Imaum, pray to God that he will be pleased to accomplish thy petition by these my hands;" and Algazali added, "Yea, Lord Allah! be it by the hands of this man." Whereupon El Mehedi departed after a certain time from Bagdad and returned to his native place, whither he bore so profound an impression of Algazali's prayer on his heart that he firmly believed the empire of the Almoravides in Africa would be destroyed by his means.

He had thus no sooner reached Mahedia than he began to preach his new opinions, instructing the people therein, and much exciting the dwellers in that district; for which cause Acis Ben Nacir desired to punish him, but could not get the preacher into his hands; because the latter, informed of his purpose, took flight, repairing to the city of Bugia, where he also preached and caused much disorder.

There the Wali of that city, Aben Hamid, likewise desired to take him and punish him as a disturber of the people; but again El Mehedi received timely notice and concealed himself from the storm, remaining in his hiding-place until he found an opportunity for leaving Bugia in secret. He next proceeded to Melala, in a hamlet of which district it was that he met his disciple and successor, Abdelmumen Ben Aly Ben Yali.

All the followers of El Mehedi were divided by him into ten classes,—the first and principal class being composed of those ten men by whom he was first proclaimed, as hath been related above; the second was the council of fifty; the third the council of seventy, that last being appointed for the settlement of ordinary affairs; the fourth was the class of the Alimes and men of learning; the fifth was formed of

the Hafizes or traditionaries, who are well represented by our writers of history; the sixth was formed of a hierarchy selected from his own family; the seventh were the natives of Herga, his birthplace; the eighth were the people of Tinmaul; the ninth were the inhabitants of Chirniba; and in the tenth were all the men of war belonging to the Cabilas of Ganfysa, Hintiba, and others, cavalry, cross-bowmen, and infantry of all arms included. Each of these classes held its place apart in all the assemblies, whether for peace or war, during the marches and in the encampments, nor was that order of arrangement once disturbed during the time of El Mehedi's government, from his first proclamation, when the Almohades vowed allegiance to his rule, namely, until the day of his death,—a period, according to the computation of Yahye Ben Ahmed Aben Omeira, of eight years, eight months, and thirteen days.

Certain books have been attributed to El Mehedi, with poems, the last being principally verses composed in praise of his vizier and successor, Abdelmumen Ben Aly.

Of the ten companions of El Mehedi by whom he had first been proclaimed, four alone remained at his death, the other six having died in battle with the Almoravides: these men now determined to confide the whole government to one of their number, to the end that the sovereignty which in defiance of the powerful King of Morocco they had established at the cost of so much blood and so many labours, might be the more easily maintained and defended. They consequently took counsel with the cavaliers of the two assemblies of the fifty and the seventy, when all agreed to choose the Vizier of El Mehedi, Abdelmumen Aben Aly (one of those four companions of their departed ruler who still survived), to command them in his place.

And if in this election there were neither disagreements nor diversities of opinion, that was in part attributable to the admirable virtues of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, but partly also to the recollection of that favour with which El Mehedi had honoured and distinguished him above them all. Every man knew well that their departed teacher had rejoiced in the deeds of arms performed by Abdelmumen, and in the presence of all his followers had frequently expressed his sense of the high qualities of his Vizier, declaring the hopes

which he founded thereon; nay, El Mehedi had more than once affirmed that while Abdelmumen Ben Aly lived he had no fear respecting the fate of their empire.

All, therefore, as by divine inspiration, concurred to exalt the Vizier to be their uncontroled commander and absolute lord, saluting him by the august titles of Caliph and Ameer, Amuminin, or Prince of the Faithful. His three companions were the first to offer him the oath of allegiance; they were followed by the councils of fifty and seventy, after whom all the Almohades took the oath in like manner.

The Abbreviator of the African historians describes this election in a manner wherein there are some notable differences, and although I do not esteem his relation to be of equal worth with that of Yahye Ben Ahmed Ben Omeira, which I have hitherto followed, yet as he is of such high authority among the Arabians I will not omit his account. He relates the matter on this wise:—

"The death of El Mehedi was not made known among the Africans for some time after it had taken place, being concealed, either by the order of Mehedi himself, or by the care of his Vizier Abdelmumen Aben Aly, who proposed to the members of the Council of Ten, still sorrowing, that they should acknowledge him as the successor of El Mehedi, seeing that the latter had so willed and commanded. And this decree of their late ruler they were not unwilling to fulfil, according to some authors, while, according to others, each man pretended that El Mehedi had appointed himself to be his successor; and there consequently ensued much discord between them. Thereupon the tribes began to divide into factions; and this proceeded to so dangerous an extent that there was cause to fear the destruction of the state from their violence: whereupon, becoming alarmed by the prospect of that disunion, the companions agreed to elect Abdelmumen Aben Aly."

The author of the book called "The Princes" relates that event in the manner which follows:—"The death of El Mehedi was concealed during the space of three years, for he did indeed survive the defeat which had been suffered by the Almohades but a very short time, his malady having been much aggravated by the grief which that misfortune occasioned him, and the sickness then afflicting him

increasing until he died. But this event was known to Abdelmumen Aben Aly alone, and the Vizier contrived to govern in the name of El Mehedi as if he had been still alive. During this time Abdelmumen Ben Aly was bringing up a young lion, which he taught to caress and fawn upon him, and he likewise took a bird, which he instructed to utter phrases in the tongues of Arabia and Barbary,—certain words, that is to say, which signified "Abdelmumen is the defender and support of the state." When he had completed the education of these animals, and considered that the bird was sufficiently perfect in its speech and the lion in its flatteries, he caused a spacious hall to be constructed in a house which he possessed outside Tinmaul, and in the centre of the same was erected a column, on the summit of which the cage of the bird was placed: he likewise provided a suitable concealment for his lion in this hall, wherein he proposed that the principal Xeques of the Almohades should assemble.

One day, therefore, that the councils and the people were congregated within the building, Abdelmumen ascended the Mimbar which had been erected for the harangues, and which served at the same time as the secret cage for the lion. Thence the Vizier of El Mehedi addressed himself to the people; he gave thanks to God, uttered benedictions on the Prophet, and extolled their departed ruler, El Mehedi, on whom he implored the Divine Mercy. He then prayed that the same might be extended over himself and all who heard him; which done, he announced the death of their leader, and condoled with the people on the great loss which they, as well as he, had sustained. The lamentations then made among the assembled Almohades were very great, but Abdelmumen Ben Aly said to them: "Nay, but the Imaum is in a more blessed condition, and wishes only that among you, whom he hath left behind him, there shall be no discord or disunion. He desires that we should not yield to our passions nor be governed by considerations of personal interest, but proceeding as becomes true Almohades, should concur to elect a Caliph Ameer who may defend and rule us, that our enemies do not destroy our empire."

Having thus spoken, he remained silent, and while the

Xeques, with the rest of those present, also held their peace, undecided and perplexed, the bird exclaimed in a clear and distinct voice: "Honour, victory, and power, to our Lord the Caliph Abdelmumen Aben Aly, Prince of the Faithful; he is the defence and support of the empire."

At the same moment Abdelmumen drew the fastenings which held the concealed door of the lion's cage, when the animal instantly sallied forth into the midst of the hall: seeing this, the whole assembly were greatly terrified, the animal showing its teeth, lashing its sides with its tail, and glaring around with eyes that sparkled as with fire. The frightened people would fain have fled, but none dared move, when Abdelmumen advancing with calm serenity faced the lion, which changed its menacing attitude to one of great humility, as it had been instructed to do. After a few moments thus spent, the subjugated animal, approaching gently, caressed and licked the hands of its master.

The Almohades, beholding that prodigy, then proclaimed Abdelmumen Ben Aly their Caliph with one voice, declaring that they neither could nor ought to hope for a clearer manifestation of the Divine Will, or of that of their Imaum El Mehedi. They consequently took the oath of allegiance to their new Caliph that same day, the lion following him whithersoever he went. Nay, even to the house of prayer did the animal accompany his lord; and that lion contributed to the exaltation of a prince who subsequently exalted Islam. The circumstances here described gave occasion to those excellent verses of Abi Aly Anas, wherein he has a passage to the following effect:—

1. The fierce lion, with erected main, was thy aid to mount the throne.

2. The birds take human voices to laud thy virtues and proclaim thee Ameer!

3. Well, therefore, art thou entitled to call thyself henceforward, Bimrallah, King of Kings!*

The oath of allegiance was taken to Abdelmumen by the three councils on Thursday the 13th day of Ramazan in the year 524; but the solemn and public act of allegiance

* Ameer Bimrallah: king by the command of God, or by the grace of God.—*Condé.*

did not take place until two years afterwards, and was performed on Friday the 20th day of Rebie Primera, in the year 526. The oath was first taken by the fifty Almohade Xeques; these were followed by all the people, congregated for that purpose in the Aljama of Tinmaul. The festival was celebrated under happy auguries, and on that day the star of felicity which had shone so long for the Almoravides became obscure; nay, their fortune then abandoned them, seeing that the illustrious prince, whose exaltation is here described, obtained signal victories over them, and made himself master of their States. With infinite glory he conquered all the land of Almagreb and Africa, even to Barca. The whole country of Spain, with its dependencies, also fell under his rule; Abdelmumen Ben Aly being ultimately proclaimed sovereign of those varying climes in all the Almimbares of the numerous mosques.

CHAP. XXXII.—OF THE VICTORY OBTAINED BY KING ALFONSO OVER THE MOSLEMAH, AND OF THE CONSOLATORY EPISTLE SENT BY THE FAKIR ABY ZACARIA TO PRINCE TAXFIN, WHO HAD ESCAPED THE DEATH WHICH MENACED HIM.

THE war against the Christians was meanwhile continued in Spain by Prince Taxfin with varying success; but he was finally defeated in a great battle by Alfonso, King of the Christians, and very few of the Almoravides escaped that day from his avenging sword. The Christians obtained possession of the Moslemah camp, the brave Taxfin maintaining himself to the last with admirable steadiness, though surrounded by but few of his people and exposed to the fierce attacks of the enemy's cavalry, men sheathed in iron and shining in armour of bronze. Yet not all his efforts could avail to recover the battle, although he did not suffer himself to be intimidated by the horrors of that cruel carnage, nor disturbed by the perils in which his own person was placed, but retired fighting valiantly, as doth the wounded pard when pursued by the ardent company of the hunters.

On the occasion of this sanguinary battle, the Alcatib, or

secretary, of Prince Taxfin, the Faki Abu Zacaria, wrote a long poem in elegant verse, in which he laboured to console his lord for the defeat and misfortune of that day, and congratulated him on having escaped therefrom with life. He furthermore depicts the vicissitudes of the fortune of arms, the perils of war, and the stratagems used in the same, adding many remarks on military affairs. The letter of Zacaria is in substance as follows:—

Illustrious monarch! great and strong in arms!
Who among all thy followers e'er hath shown
Valour and skill in combat like to thine?
Who, eager to engage the faithless foe,
Whether by hand of might or cautious wile,
Hath proved himself thine equal in the field?

Whether at rising of the roseate morn
Or in deep darkness of the murkiest night,
Who like thyself, with heart that owns no fear,
On the dread path hath held his stedfast way,
When e'en the bravest of our brave hath owned
Wild throbs of terror darting through his breast?

Yet have our warriors proved their might of heart
In many a fearful strife. Blood-stained and fierce,
How rage they, eager-eyed, the battle through,
Half hidden by the dust that is but slaked
In the red rain of glory! From bright dawn,
E'en to black night, they hold them on their way,
And yet—not night!—the lightning of their arms
Hath formed a brighter day, and the full splendour
Of their great deeds hath poured a fairer light,
As, guided by the fires of holy zeal,
They seek the Christian foe. Bold they advance
To the dread contest of the open field!
Or, wily now as valiant, cautious come
To form the secret ambush, and await
The misbelieving horde in patient stillness.

Now turn some few their backs upon the fight,
Seeking with coward step their base lives' safety.—
Then thousands fall a prey to death unsparing,
And thousands more must fall! But see! our brethren
Come rushing to their aid. With sheltering arm
These turn the battle and oppose a front
Firm as the rock—resistless as the torrents
That plunge impetuous down to seek the plains

Now is the strife renewed! thick fall the blows!
And riven corslets leave the bosom bare,
As cleft beneath the ruthless stroke they fall,
Those bright arms sounding on the startled soil.
The frequent hoof-clang bids the seared earth tremble
As the proud war-horse, thundering, spurns the field;
The sharp lance revels in the quivering flesh;
The sword drinks deep of gore, and mid the waves
Of that red lake the warriors plunge amain
(As camels, mad with thirst, invade the streams)
Seeking to quench their rage amidst the flow
That gushes ceaseless forth from gaping wounds,
Oped by the ruthless blade and ready lance.

But theirs is thirst that not the night's cool dews
Avail to quench; the drops that fall in blessing
On the fair flowering mead, do but offend
Their hot and dust-soiled lips; for now the rage
Is that of hungry and ferocious wolves
Contending with the fierce and sullen bear.
Blind with their fury, where they plant the foot
They reck not, they! and on the faithless sward
Of that red field they fall amidst the gore!

The Christians near the lofty tents, and now
Through many a noble heart the lances pierce
Their eager way; high waves the flashing sword;
Confusion reigns around! Nor force avails,
Nor well-planned stratagem, that oft hath changed
The face of many a battle, seeming lost—
Yet turned by timely craft to victory.

Nor thou, my king, believe that wiles of war
Are less than laudable. The foe to blind
By well-feigned arts is not a worthless skill,
But hath been ever used, and ever praised,
Since battle raged on earth. The leader sage
And practised in the sanguinary game
Of glorious war, yea, captains great as thou,
Have still invented such, and ever sought
The aid of stratagem. O thou! the bravest
Of all the brave who joy in thy command,
Hear me, and let my feeble voice expound
The lessons that experience wise hath taught!

Few are thy years, but every one brings light;
To-day thou art more wise than yesterday,
And each new day shall see thy worth increase,
Adding a power to that its eve beheld.

Hear then my words: He who is called in youth
To lead the ranks of war, must learn to meet
With cheek unblenched the fiercest of the fight;
To meet and smiling dare; the clarion's voice
Must learn to list unmoved; the startling cries
Of men that rush infuriate on their foe
Give him no dread; the lightning flash of arms
His eyes must brave undazzled; the wild clangour
Of blows, that rend the panoply and reach
The heart beneath, his ears undaunted hear.
The whirlwind rush of horsemen, wheeling swift
To right—to left—before him and about
In fierce array, must not amaze his mind.
And he must meet the shock all undismayed,
E'en though from every side the warriors come,
Blood-stained and hot, in clouds of dust involved,
Raging around him as do thunder clouds
When the fierce elements hold angry war.

This for the soldier; but my words are now
Of leaders, O my king, and of such counsel
As generals use to take. The wiles of war
Practised by great commanders, and such princes
As love the lore of arms, and like thyself
Bear the high mind of noble and of warrior.

And now, not that I hold myself a leader
Of practised worth in battles, shalt thou hear me,
But that I am thy servant true, and know
How many a famous captain hath maintained
The glory of our Faith, by well used skill
In these proved arts, and how full oft the field
Hath owed its cry of 'Victory' to the power
Obtained by timely craft. Wherefore, Oh king,
I proffer to thine ear these counsels grave,
Which I do pray thee hear with favouring mind.

Seek ever for thy camp the fairest ground,
Give it broad space, with entrance and with exit
Well placed and fitly guarded. Shouldst thou fear
The sudden onslaught of a practised foe,
Trench it around with deep and ample fosse.
If in the field thou followest on the track
Of flying enemies—or, in thy turn
Art by the same pursued—see that thou leave
No field, no hamlet undestroyed. Swift fly
Thy light-armed troopers through the neighbouring lands,
Burning the towns, and from outlying farms
Bearing all product. Feign thou oft assault,

Which shall but scare the foe, and not assail.
Frequent and bright let fires the night illume
Around the camp where thou hast made thy lair.
And still by day let veiling smoke arise
In lofty columns round thy well-watched leaguer,
And on the heights that circumscribe thy seat.
Useful are all these feignings, they maintain
Fear in the foe, and keep his harassed bands
In ceaseless watchfulness of that worst kind
That breeds anxiety, and makes him dread
To push his boldness further: these give check
Full oft to such incursions as might else
Have proved thy bane, and worked thee utmost woe.

Within thy camp, do thou permit no place
To hordes of worthless idlers. To the battle
Lead none but him, the brave and hardy soldier
Whose arm shall prove thy stay. Him only take
Who looks to gain the guerdon of his valour
From his king's favouring hand, or in that life
Where Paradise provides him joys eternal.

Ere thou dost offer battle to the foe,
Do thou dispose thy troops upon the field
With ample verge and space; or, if thy flank
Present thee place for ambush, be that shelter
Not lightly disregarded. Thy close bands
Place in no narrow way, wherein thy movements
May suffer lack of space. Still less endure
To lose the value of thy horse by choice
Of such position, or of any site
Where thy bold cavalry impede the action
Of the brave foot, destroying their effect,
And leaving thus thy battle shorn of half
The force that it should offer to the foe.

Be strong on every side that forms thy host,
The front, the rear, the flanks: all four be guarded;
And let thy good reserve be also cared for
With heedful mind that leaves no point unmarked.

The general's place is in the midst. The life
And soul of all is he, and his due stand
Is in the centre. As the human heart,
Which gives to all the frame vigour and movemen
So is the captain, and should so be placed.
Thy generals to the front despatch, for they
Are as the eyes and guides to all the host.
Let those who follow in the foremost ranks

Be ever of the bravest and most practised
In all the terrors and the toils of war.

The more conspicuous ensigns of thy state
Do not thou wear in battle, Oh, my king;
Suffice it thee that thou art known to those
Of thine immediate following, and the few
Who bear thy high commandments through the host.

Hast thou the greater power, then hide thou that
From the proud foe. But is his might the greater,
Seek to deceive him, and beware of ambush.
For much doth love the Infidel the wiles
Of that deceit.

Ere the stern fight begins
Look well to what is in thy rear. Deep marshes
And fordless rivers never can be there
But to thy peril. See too that no fort
Restricts thy backward path, and in retreat
Let the firm rear-guard well perform its task.
For he who holds compact his force, retiring
Shalt oft become the assailant, and again
Facing the enemy, ensure defeat
To him who thought the victory in his hand,
As oft our noble captains well have proved.

When, doubtful of thy force, thou seest the issue
Of battle menacing, and canst not hope
To call thyself the conqueror, let delay,
Concealed with art, assist thee. Show no terror,
But lingering long till evening hours approach
Then first begin the fight. When once engaged
Let no weak fears be visible. Faint heart
Let none detect in thee: for if thy fears
Be marked by those thou leadest, be thou sure
That blank dismay shall seize them, and thy bands
Routed shall fly the field. If in deep ways
And narrow defiles thou thy foe engage,
Keep well thy ranks together, the last files
Holding compact: thus the determined fight
Equal shalt thou maintain. Let blow on blow
Fall fast and fierce; let thousand deaths surround thee;
Yet blench not thou. Nay, fan the fierce flame higher,
As whirlwinds raise the clouds to heaven. Thy swords
Let them be gleams of lightning, and thy lances
Cease not from piercing hearts. Now rage the warriors
Tearing each other as do ravening wolves
Or bears in maddest fury. Thou meanwhile,

Thy watchful eye well guarding every point,
Shalt care for all, and that which best shall aid them
Provide with steady forethought, swift, and sure.

So shalt thou win the general's highest name,
And so arrive at that which is the summit
Of hope, fair Victory, aim of thy desire.

If in the fight some fault hath been committed,
But not with ill intent, let not the man
Who thus hath erred in service, feel thine anger;
And show him not those looks that wound the heart.
His general's glance of anger deeply grieves
The brave man's soul, but if no act of mark
Thou more canst hope from him who once hath failed thee,
Confide the work to hands of greater power,
But never let those darkened looks appear
Which tell too clearly of a mind disturbed.
When these the general shows, his prudent followers
Note them, and there are those who with sharp words,
That wound as keenest swords, will scornful say,
"Hast thou the leader's troubled aspect marked?"
Yet thou, O noble race of old Zanhaga,
When hath thy heart known fear? when hath base thought
Of terror found an entrance to thy breast?
Sons of the Desert! are ye not as lions
Who roam the waste with watchful eyes, and guard
With equal care green vale and dusky wood?
What, then, hath seized the King? Have ye, then, failed
In aught that duty craves, or to his banners
Proved treacherous, that his eyes are frowning thus?"

The prudent general sees, but shows not all:
The valiant leader forms the quick resolve,—
And his resolves are firm. He knows no fear,
Nor will he turn his back in shameless flight.
But evil chance may well befall the bravest;
Nay doth, as late we proved. Man, who is mortal,
Cannot be always happy. One alone,
Thy grandsire Juzef, held the power to chain
Unstable fortune: on his banners only
Hath victory hung unmoved, until the day
When Allah granted equal fate to him,
Aly thy father, but to none beside.

Of this there still are memories, such as time
Can ne'er efface. But wherefore hast thou failed,
The brave and generous Taxfin—changeful Fortune?
The noble, liberal, humane, and just,

Beneficent to all, and ever good,—
How couldst thou fly, capricious power, and turn
To grace his enemy, who in our loss
Hath found advantage? E'en thine eyes should weep
For his misfortune; since his heart hath found
Strength to subdue the suffering it hath felt,
And thou hast not beheld the grief he bears!

Who but must marvel at an age so tender
To find so much of force? The grievous chance
Of fell defeat, the combat wild and fierce,
The cruel carnage, have not power to move
His constant heart. With aspect still serene,
And firmest will, he gives his high commands,
Disposing all things in those moments dread
As in the calm of sweet security.
Yet all the pressure of the stern occasion
He saw, and felt, and mourned. Its perils all,
And grave results in future times, lay clear
Before his ken; yet left him unappalled.

Then too, when all was ended, to the guilty
A generous pardon did he not extend?
Proof of his soul's true greatness: who save he
Had shunned to meet the justly earned reproof,
Whose righteousness the sufferer's self must own?

One word of counsel more. Oh, noble Taxfin,
Well doth it suit the purposes of war
At times to send false summons through thy camp
Of force superior in the foe, of wiles
That he prepares to practise, of attacks
Nightly to be expected, of surprises
And fierce assaults in darkness; for thy people,
Accustomed thus to thought of constant peril,
Shall learn to brave the danger when it comes
In truth and presence. When the night obscure
Brings the fierce enemy around thy camp,
They who might else have filled thy soldiers' hearts
With dread and fear, now, meeting brave repulse,
And, in their turn assailed, shall fly dismayed
From thy brave troopers, and their lances' point
Shall mark the shoulders of the baffled train.

And now bethink thee; hast thou not full oft
Wrung victory from the banners of the foe?
Hast thou not called thyself lord of his holds,
And made his land thy conquest. Of his captains

Hast thou not seen the bravest flee before thee,
And brought his most renowned and noblest leaders
To yield them to thy sword? Yea, and full oft!

Illustrious youth, thou art our best of blessings;
Thy life is all our hope; thy future triumphs
And radiant victories make glad the hearts
Of all who love thee. Thou, and only thou,
Art the delight and treasure of thy people;
In thee we find our best and firmest hold.

Joy to the world, and to the nations joy!
For thou art safe. We offer gratulations
To all for that great blessing. Thou art safe!
And lo! methinks I see the enemy
Already changed in fate! Who shall declare
That yet he may not yield? The rocks and mountains
May well fall on him; eagles and fierce vultures
May fitly tear the heart of him who fain
Would bring our country to the dismal plight
That not in all the land of Spain should breathe
One soul to sound the praises of our God.

Thrice noble Taxfin, Allah grants that thou
Shalt still remain to be thy people's hope,
Their shield, and the protection of His Law.
May God preserve thee—may the mighty hand
Which guardeth all who well invoke His aid,
Placing in Him alone their trust and hope,
Be still thy guard, Oh joy of all thy people!

CHAP. XXXIII.—WARS IN AFRICA BETWEEN THE ALMOHADES AND THE ALMORAVIDES. WARS IN SPAIN BETWEEN THE MOSLEMAH AND THE CHRISTIANS. EULOGIUM OF THE ALMORAVIDES AND THEIR CHIEFS.

In the year 524, and in the moon Xaban of that year, Abu Meruan Abdelmelic, called Amad-Dolah, King of Saragossa, died in his fortress of Rot-Alyehud, which is situate in the East of Spain. That inaccessible stronghold, the asylum and common retreat of the kings his ancestors, had long been the residence of Amad-Dolah, who was utterly abhorred by his subjects, on account of the compact and alliance into which he had entered with the King of the Christians,

Alfonso Ben Raymond Asulatain; nay, they could not endure with patience the sight of their sovereign presenting gifts to the ruler of the Infidels, and assisting him in his wars with the Almoravides.

Abu Giafar Ahmed, called Seif-Dolah, succeeded to his father, Amad-Dolah, in the administration of the state, and in the evil counsels which had disgraced the previous reign; nor had he been three years on the throne before he had made over to the enemy all the fortresses by which the eastern frontier of Spain had to that time been defended. He called himself Almostansir* Billah, and Almostain† Billah; but God did not see fit either to aid him or favour him, because of his base and cowardly alliance with the Christians; wherefore the dynasty of the Beni-Hud, so powerful in earlier times, was seen to arrive at its close in his person.

In Africa, the war between the Almoravides and the Almohades was commenced anew by Abdelmumen Aben Aly: that sovereign having first taken order for the good government of Tinmaul and the tribes dependent on his rule, then wrote to his Xeques, convoking them to the field, and assembling his people with the determination to renew the Holy War against the King of Morocco. He took counsel with his generals as to the mode in which he might most advantageously employ his troops, and resolved at length to direct their march on the Comarcas of Alziga.

That question decided, Abdelmumen left his city of Tinmaul with thirty thousand men, departing from the gates on Thursday the 24th of the moon Rebie Primera, in the year 526. He made rapid progress in the district which he first assailed, taking possession of the towns and subjugating the people with but slight resistance. Over the tribes by whom he was to a certain extent opposed, Abdelmumen also obtained victory after victory, and made conquest upon conquest. Entering the territory of Tesala, he occupied the city of Derva, subjugating to his arms the inhabitants of Velad Tifar, Velad Fezan, Velad Guyuza, and other districts; after which he passed forward until he had attained the

* The assisted of God. † The favoured of God.

city of Morocco itself, before which he fixed his camp, in the moon Xewal, of the same year 526.

Having assaulted the walls of the capital during several days, Abdelmumen Ben Aly then passed on to Velad Tedula, which he took by storm; he next directed his march on Derat, and from that city he proceeded to the town of Sa'e. When the inhabitants of the last-named place heard that he was approaching, they came peacefully forth to meet him, offering him their allegiance, and placing themselves beneath the shelter of his faith and protection. Abdelmumen thereupon took possession of the city, which he entered on Saturday, the 24th of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 525. In the following year, the victorious leader continued his conquests, and before the close of the year 527 he had subjugated all the district of Teze.

In Spain, the Ameer Taxfin continued to make war upon the Christians, with whom he was engaged in a fierce contest upon all his frontiers; but the astute Alfonso Ben Raymund succeeded by means of the wicked treaties made with him by Almostansir Billah Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Hud Saif-Dolah, King of Saragossa, in obtaining possession of Alyehud, with many other very important fortresses of eastern Spain. Almostansir Billah received in return a large portion of the territory of Toledo, with the half of that city, and to this agreement, which was made in the moon of Dylcada, and the year 527,* Abu Giafar Almostansir was moved, principally by the fear lest his own subjects, in their abhorrence of his treaties and alliances with the King Alfonso Ben Raymond, should surrender those fortresses to the Almoravides. He was besides apprehensive that he should not be able to maintain himself in his sovereignty of the states transmitted to him by his fathers, if that tyrant should deprive him of his friendship, as he not unfrequently threatened to do.

Inflated by these advantages, which rendered him very powerful on the shores of the Cinga and Seguira, the enemy of Allah, even Alfonso Ben Raymond, sallied forth with a well-appointed army from Mekinesa, and advanced

* This is the date given by Abdel Halim. Alcodai, on the contrary, affirms that these treaties were made in 534: but Alfonso Ben Raymond was not then living.—*Conde.*

to Medina Fraga, to which city he laid close siege. This place is of great strength by the natural disposition of the site, being constructed on the summit of a range of rocks which are cut through in many parts by torrents; the bravery of the Moslemah by whom it was defended, added greatly, moreover, to that strength, insomuch that Alfonso could do nothing of importance, and the siege was much prolonged. In the skirmishes which were occasionally fought, there were sanguinary and obstinate contests between those of the Christian camp and the Moslemah, not a few of whom then obtained the rewards of martyrdom. At this time the Wali of Lerida was Aben Gania; and that leader, knowing what was passing at the siege of Medina Fraga, went forth with a chosen body of cavalry to cut off the enemy's supplies and intercept whatever provisions might be proceeding to the camp of the Christians. Then it pleased God that on a certain day, when the Moslemah of Medina Fraga were engaged in one of those combats with the Christians which have before been alluded to, and had assailed the enemies of Allah in their own camp, that the cavalry and other forces led by Aben Gania approached the scene of strife. The King Alfonso, perceiving that body of horsemen coming towards his camp at full speed with the manifest purpose of attacking his people, drew off a part of the Christian host, and marched out to meet Aben Gania: but his troops could not withstand the impetuous onset of the new comers. Those valiant Almoravides broke and defeated the Christians, who fled dismayed and routed after a horrible slaughter, very few of them escaping the death. That cruel destroyer of the Moslemah, King Alfonso, himself was among the first of the slain, and the field remained covered with corpses to be the food of wild beasts and birds of prey. Then Aben Gania wrote an account of that fortunate event and glorious victory to the Ameer Taxfin, who rejoiced much in the relation thus transmitted to him. The day of Fragá became one of renown among the faithful, and not without good cause; neither was it forgotten by the Christians. This important battle was fought in the year 528.

But the fortune in arms of Aly Ben Juzef, King of Morocco, was altogether the contrary to that implied by

the battle of Fraga, and his Almoravide generals were perpetually compelled to yield to the forces of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, Prince of the Almohades. The continual defeats thus endured by King Aly, the subjugation of his provinces, and the calamities inseparable from an unsuccessful war, exhausted the vast treasures of Aly Ben Juzef, while the revenues and imposts were grievously diminished by the loss of so many Cabilas; and to add to the general distress, a great famine afflicted the whole land of Mauritania, where the oppressed people began to give evidence of much discontent.

In this mournful condition of things, certain of the noble Almoravides advised their King to declare his son, the Prince Taxfin, the future sovereign of the empire, since all men knew that Ameer to be a man of great understanding, as well as infinite bravery. He was besides very famous for the exploits and deeds of arms which he had performed in Andalusia; nay, many experienced generals were found to affirm of Prince Taxfin that if he had been supplied with due succours of men from Africa, his valour and persistence, with his long practice in war, must have insured the subjugation of all Spain from sea to sea. It was furthermore added, that in all his encounters and battles with the Christians he had never been defeated but once—even that once being by an accident, and with heavy loss to the enemy. King Aly therefore agreed to that proposal, and sent letters to Prince Taxfin, desiring him to pass over at once into Africa, where the necessities of the times demanded his presence, which was more especially required to oppose the new King of the Almohades, who was going through the land triumphant and victorious.

In the year 528, Abdelmumen Ben Aly solemnised the festival of his accession to empire, and assembling the Xeques of all the tribes who owed him obedience in his city of Tinmaul, he was there proclaimed Ameer Amuminin, or Prince of the Moslemah. He likewise commanded that new money should be then coined, and in honour of El Mehedi he determined that his name should be placed thereon. The silver coin bore on one side, "There is no God but Allah; all empire is in God; there is no power but in God!" with the phrases that follow, on the other: "Allah is our

Lord; Muhamad our Apostle; El Mehedi our Imaum!" and further to distinguish his coins from those of the Almoravides, Abdelmumen caused those now in question to be made of a square form. These things being done, the new sovereign departed to the district of Teze, where, in the year 529, he founded the city of Rabaut-Teze, in the planning and arrangement of which he employed the whole of the year.

Prince Taxfin was meanwhile continuing his campaigns against the Christians with tolerably good fortune, and in the year 530, having encountered them at Fohos Atia, he engaged them in a sanguinary battle, wherein they were defeated with fearful loss; he likewise took many captives and much spoil, recovering at the same time a considerable number of the fortresses which had been held by the Christians.

In that same year of 530, the Wali of Granada, Muhamad Ben Said Ben Jaser, who governed that city for the Almoravides, built a magnificent house therein, which was constructed entirely of marble, insomuch that it appeared to be a royal palace. He likewise made delicious gardens, adorned with numerous fountains whose vases were of jasper and alabaster.

In the year 531, Prince Taxfin made an incursion on the territory of Huebte and Alarcon, when the city of Cuenca rebelled against the Almoravides and attacked the garrison. The prince therefore entered that place likewise sword in hand, after an obstinate resistance; and having finally taken the citadel by assault, he put all the inhabitants to death, without sparing a man. It was at this time that the Ameer received those letters from Africa wherein his father described to him the deplorable condition of the Almoravide dominions in that country, summoning Prince Taxfin to his aid, and expressing the hope and confidence of amelioration to be effected by his bravery and good fortune.

About the same period, Abu Talib Abdelgebar of Xucar composed certain verses,* in which he celebrated the praises of the Almoravides, and more especially those of the illus-

* These verses would seem to have been written after the death of King Aly, the father of Taxfin.—*Condé.*

trious Prince Taxfin Ben Aly Aben Juzef. These are such that for their excellence they merit to be made known to posterity, and are in substance to the following effect:—

When Allah, the All-powerful and Eternal,
Was pleased to honour this most sacred War
By glorious exaltation and increase,
He caused the minds of mortals to unite
In choice of a great leader, in whose guidance
The warriors of Islam might walk secure.

Who was the chief thus chosen? Who but he,
The noble scion of a glorious race,
Prince Taxfin, of great sires the worthy son.
Fair rose he on the world, as the clear dawn
Dispersing night and darkness—fair and bright
As crystal waters, which the morning breeze
Refreshing cools, whose lucent fount within
No breath or spot of aught less pure may enter
Than that resplendent lymph, and whose free draught
Restoreth him whose fainting lip was losing
E'en to the breath of life, yet here revives
To new-born hope and strength.

Such the exalted youth, and such his advent—
The true descendant he of Abu Jakoub,
Who came as comes the eagle fierce, his flight
Winging to far Zalacca. Blest the day,
And ever blessed be the memory
Of that most glorious field! The strong right hand
Of Abu Jakoub waved the conquering sword,
And victory closed her pinions on his banner.

Oh, Thou who didst bestow that joy-bright day,
Thou Allah, who alone canst such bestow,
Once more behold us, and again extend
A gift of equal gladness. Oh, proud Giuma!
Oh, day of bliss! wherein the Law Divine,
Scorned by the arrogant Infidel, arose
In terrible vengeance, and the Misbeliever
Called to a day of judgment! Prone they fell,
Their vile heaps festering on the loathing earth
That late they proudly spurned in pride of power.

Then what availed thy boasted might, Alfonso?
What thy fierce anger, when the great decree
Had once gone forth? On diamond tablets borne,
The ever-during will of Allah stood

Immutable, the Faithful warriors guarding,
And pouring the red lightnings of grim war
Amid the Christian hordes, consuming all
As doth the living fire.

Yea, as of old, hath Allah fixed Islam
On firm foundations, free and still secure.
By night, by day, at dawn, or by dim eve,
Whithersoe'er it list him to abide,
The Moslemah may bend his steps at will
Through all the land, to part or to remain
At his good pleasure.

The bridle of the state from Juzef's hand
To that of his great son, the generous Aly,
Was next transferred. Aly, the wise and good,
The just and prudent, who pursued the steps
Of his exalted sire, inheriting
The heart of Juzef, if not all the fortune
That waited on the first of those high Caliphs!

Then came to rule our land the valiant son
Of Aly, noble Taxfin. As the lion
That rages while the hunters throng around him
And press him close, so, bravest of the brave,
Is he our Lord. But evil times assail us:
Ambitious tyrants throng to work him woe;
While his own vassals, bold, misproud, and fierce,
Dare to perturb still more the land: they raise
The standard of rebellion, and usurp
The powers that he alone should wield. Great Allah!
Thou the Omnipotent, these many ills,
These wrongs, this violence, this rancorous hate,
And dark injustice,—all await from Thee
Their longed-for remedy. Thy hand alone
Hath power to do us right.

CHAP. XXXIV.—Of the insurrection in Algarve. Of the rebellion in Seville, Valencia, and other parts.

No long time had elapsed after the departure from Spain of the Ameer, Taxfin Aben Aly, when summoned, as above related, to Africa, by the King his father, before the fire of insurrection against the Almoravides began to kindle in Spain, the first sparks of the same were seen to glow in

Algarve; and the primal cause thereof took its birth on this wise:—

A native of the province of Xilbe, Ahmed Ben Husein Ben Cosai, called also Abul Casim Rumi, having sold his patrimony in the days of his youth, then travelled into divers parts, and being at Almeria he there listened to the teachings of the renowned Alarif, which having done, Ahmed Ben Husein returned to his village, where he began to preach the doctrines of Algazali, which had been condemned by the government in Spain, as well as in Africa, as before related. He soon assembled a considerable number of companions and followers; whereupon he assumed the appellation of Imaum, and subsequently repairing to Seville, this Ahmed Aben Husein there increased the amount of his influence to a great extent. In the commencement of the year 539, this man, with all his followers, joined the band of Muhamad Ben Yahye of Saltis, known also as Aben Alcâbêla, and who called himself Mustafa, he also possessing a large number of followers and admirers. At a word, these men found means to infuse their doctrines into the minds of the most distinguished among the youth of Algarve, when Ahmed Ben Husein suggested to his people that it would be well they should make themselves masters, either by fraud or force, of Calat Mertula, which was the strongest fortress in Algarve.

To that end, about seventy men concealed themselves in the suburbs of Mertula, which they entered separately by night-time, and in a manner which caused no suspicion in the inhabitants. Being thus assembled, they fixed Thursday, the 12th day of the moon Safer, in the above-mentioned year of 539, for the period of their attempt; and at dawn of that day they attacked the gates of the fortress, which they forced and entered, slaying the guards by whom they were defended.

Now it had been previously agreed that the people of Jabura and of Xelbe should come to the aid of Ahmed Aben Husein Ben Cosai in this matter, and accordingly they now appeared, led on by Muhamad Ben Omar Ben Almondar Abul Walid, a youth descended from one of the most noble families of Xelbe; he was a son of Meznar of Xelbe, where he had first seen the day, but had been brought up

and educated even from his childhood in Seville, where he was much remarked for his learning and the nobility of his descent.

But Almondar Abul Walid was so profoundly devoted to the new doctrines and the sect of Algazali, that in the fervour of his youth he retired to the solitude of a desert waste, on the shores of the sea at Rabat Raihena, having first given his patrimony in alms to the poor. This youth was one of the most ardent followers of Ahmed Aben Husein Aben Cosai, to whose band he now attached himself, and whose cause he zealously promoted in his own country of Xelbe.

Muhamad Ben Omar Ben Almondar was assisted by Abu Muhamad Sid-Rai, a son of the Vizier of Jabura, who had been the friend of his childhood and youth; and both these nobles united themselves publicly to the band of Aben Cosai within less than a month after he had taken possession of Calat Mertula; that is to say, in the beginning of the moon of Rebie Segunda, in the year 539.

Muhamad Almondar and Abu Muhamad Sid-Rai, being men of much distinction, soon brought after them large numbers of the people, many of whom had long felt oppressed and been rendered discontented by the insolence of the Almoravides. With these, the leaders now therefore determined on the conquest of other fortresses, and proceeded accordingly to Hisn Mergec, a stronghold in the district of Xelbe, where the Almoravides had entrenched themselves very strongly. But Ahmed Ben Husein Aben Cosai led his forces with much valour, and conducting the assault with infinite ability, he defeated the troops opposed to him, slaying great numbers of them; he then entered the citadel sword in hand, the few who escaped flying to Medina Beja with the news of that downfall.

Then the Almoravide garrison which held the last-mentioned city, believing themselves to be menaced with a similar fate, resolved on immediate departure: they required safe conduct from the inhabitants to pass into Seville; and had no sooner abandoned Medina Beja than Muhamad Ben Omar Ben Almondar Abul Walid took possession of that fortress with the troops which had been confided to him by Muhamad Sid-Rai, son of the Vizier of Jabura.

Now Muhamad Ben Omar did not fail to find many of his partizans in the city of Beja; among others his brother Ahmed Ben Almondar, with Abdallah Ben Aly Ben Samail. Nor did the chief of the insurrection, Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai, long delay to join him there; and even Sid-Rai, the son of the Vizier, soon afterwards arrived. To the latter, Aben Cosai, induced by his reputation for ability and by the authority of his position, gave the command of Medina Beja, while he bestowed the Waliate of Xelbe on Omar Ben Almondar.

There subsequently arose some discord and misunderstanding between these two leaders: but Aben Cosai requiring them to appear before him at Calat Mertula, contrived to set these at rest, and the generals became good friends once more, or at least they controlled the expression of their resentment, and appeared to be so. Omar Ben Almondar then returned to his government, and assembling troops from Oksonoba, to whom he joined all that he could muster in Xelbe, with a considerable number from Merida, he once more returned to Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai, with whose army he united his forces. The chief subsequently made Omar Ben Almondar generalissimo of his host and administrator of the country, giving him a share in the state, and conferring on him the title of Aziz Billah.

The success of their first undertaking having emboldened these leaders to attempt further aggressions, they determined to proceed to the Guadiana, and sitting down before Huelbe, they laid siege to that place, of which they obtained possession without much difficulty. They thence passed on to Libla, which they also besieged, assaulting the place with numerous machines and engines of war. Here there came to the camp of Aben Husein and Omar an accession to their strength in new troops, these last joining their party from Algarve. Many obstinate combats were then fought, but Aben Cosai finally obtained possession of the fortress of Libla also, and this he did by means of the intelligence which he had found means to establish between himself and the Alcayde of the place, even Juzef Ben Ahmed El Pedruchi, who had become discontented with the state of things then prevailing, and who, joining himself to the

party of the rebels, placed a tower which was defended by the Almoravides in their hands, when the troops of Aben Cosai soon became masters of the place.

The good fortune of that result infused boldness into the hearts of those led by Aben Cosai, and encouraged their chief to direct his march against the territory of Seville: he entered the Comarca of the last-named city accordingly: this was then under the command of the Ameer Abu Zacaria Yahye Ben Aly Aben Gania, by whom every measure that could be taken for the defence of the place and its inhabitants was at once adopted: but the host of Aben Cosai departing from Libla, made their way without impediment to Hisn Alcazar and Tolliata, which are the principal fortresses of that Amelia, and both of which they took. The force now commanded by Aben Cosai was very large, and the news of his success had been noised abroad through all Spain. The report of his new acquisitions, more especially those last mentioned, contributed much to the increase of his power; and having reached Hisn Azahar, he overran the Comarcas of Seville, taking possession of Atrayana, which surrendered after a short resistance.

Now the general-in-chief of the Almoravide forces in Spain, Abu Zacaria Yahye Ben Aly Aben Gania, was then at Cordova, and when intelligence of these things was brought to him, he had at once assembled troops with intent to put a stop to the disorders in the Algarve and restrain the boldness of the rebels; but being informed of the occupation of Libla by Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai, he had first marched his forces in that direction.

The rebels, who had taken possession of Atrayana, were instantly made aware that the Wali Aben Gania was advancing to dispossess them; Aben Cosai having partizans in every district, by whom he was constantly informed of all that took place. But as the Wali, even Abu Zacaria Ben Aly Aben Gania, approached, so did the rebel captain, Omar Ben Almondar, retire, and at length, not daring to await the Almoravide General longer, Almondar recrossed the Guadiana in full flight. Aben Gania then pursued the retreating army with eager speed, and overtaking them while at no great distance from the river, a battle ensued, in which

the Wali broke and defeated his opponents, slaying large numbers in the battle as well as in the subsequent pursuit, wherein he likewise made many captives.

The night after his defeat Omar Ben Almondar arrived at Libla, which he did his best to strengthen and prepare for the siege that he saw to be imminent: he was there joined by the Alcayde Juzef Ben Ahmed El Pedruchi, who repaired to his assistance from Xelbe. Two days later appeared the Wali Aben Gania, and laid siege to the city, which defended itself well, making bold sallies and inflicting not a few surprises on the camp of the besiegers, between whom and the troops of Omar Ben Almondar many obstinate skirmishes were fought.

But the season, which was that of winter, proved unfavourable to the forces of Aben Gania, who were exposed to all the inclemencies thereof, and suffered greatly: their general maintained the siege, nevertheless, during three months, at the end of which time he received intelligence to the effect that the people of Cordova had assassinated the Cadi of their city, having been incited to revolt by Abu Giafar Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain, who had assembled them in the Great Algarve on Thursday, the 5th day of Ramazan, in the year 539, and having obtained possession of the city, had assumed the title of Ameer Almanzor Billah.

These news compelled Aben Gania to raise the siege of Libla, and he struck his camp accordingly, directing the march of his troops upon Seville. On the way he was furthermore informed that the people of Valencia, whose Wali was his own nephew, Abu Muhamad Abdallah, the son of his brother, Muhamad Ben Aly Aben Gania, had also risen in rebellion. The letters of Abu Muhamad, informing his uncle of this fact, declared that neither his own authority nor that of the Cadi of the city had availed to prevent the insurrection.

Now the Cadiazgo of Cordova was at that time held by Meruan Ben Abdallah Ben Meruan Abul Melic, who had been appointed to his office by the Ameer Taxfin Ben Aly on the 24th day of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 538; and the letters of the Wali Abu Muhamad described that magistrate as ascending the tribune and speaking to the

people with great energy and eloquence, setting before them the great services performed by the Almoravides in the holy wars which they had maintained against the Christians: he reminded them of the aid which those warriors had brought to Gezira, and how Valencia itself had by them been delivered from the hands of the Infidels. But all these exhortations had remained without effect, and been as words preached to the desert. The Wali added, that neither had he himself found it possible to restrain the people, or even to hold them in check with his Almoravide troops, insomuch that he had been compelled to escape with his family in the night, and to proceed with all the speed of his horses to Xativa, whither he had arrived at dawn of Wednesday, the 18th of Ramazan, and where he had fortified himself with his followers as best he might.

These letters, with those which he subsequently received, caused the general Abu Zacaria Aben Gania much anxiety, and the rather as at the same time the provinces of Murcia, Almeria, and Malaga were also in revolt, the people of the last-mentioned city having compelled their Wali, Almanzor Ben Muhamad Ben Alhâg, to retire with his Almoravides into the Alcazaba,* where they had held them vigorously besieged during seven months. All these things alarmed the Wali Abu Zacaria Yahye Ben Aly Aben Gania to so great a degree, that he not only lost all hope of their bringing the war in Algarve to a favourable issue, and tranquillizing that country, but even began to fear that all Spain would soon be wrenched from the Almoravides, seeing that commotions and insurrections were now rife in all the provinces of the land.

Induced by these convictions, Abu Zacaria Aben Gania now wrote to his brother, Muhamad Aben Aly Aben Gania, commanding him to depart from Seville with the ships and troops of the Almoravides, and joining to these whatever he could find in Almeria, to set sail for the Majorcas, which he was furthermore directed to occupy and strengthen to the utmost of his power, seeing that there was no longer security for them in Spain. This Muhamad Ben Aly Aben Gania accordingly accomplished without loss of time; but

* Alcazaba: the Citadel.

on the departure of the ships from Seville, the Alcayde of the frontier, Abdallah Ben Maymon, found means to raise himself to the command of the city, when he perfidiously put to death the Almoravides who had been left behind, with not a few of the citizens, who had endeavoured to oppose themselves to his tyrannical violence.

In Almeria, on the same occasion, Abdallah Ben Mardanis rose in rebellion, and made himself master of that city; while in Cordova the tumultuous and disorderly people deposed the rebel Wali, Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain, after fourteen days of authority, being moved thereto by the plottings and insidious gifts of a party which had risen in favour of Seif-Dolah Ahmed Aben Hud, King of Saragossa and eastern Spain, who was then on the frontiers of Toledo, where he dwelt in league with and under the protection of the Christians. The royal descent of Seif-Dolah, his great craft, and immense riches, went far to produce this movement among the people of Cordova, and much facilitated his reception by that light-minded populace, whose easily-won voices proclaimed him king, with the title of Almostansir Billah, which they bestowed on him at the same time. He made his entry into Cordova accordingly, and was received with many acclamations. Yet at the end of a week from his accession, the new sovereign was compelled to leave the city, seeing that the inhabitants were already weary of him and of the violences exercised by his followers. He consequently retired to the stronghold of Foronchulios; nor had he done so before the time, seeing that his Vizier, Sanche, who had been detained in Cordova and had not accompanied the king, was torn to pieces by the inconstant populace, at the moment when he was preparing to follow his master.

The raising of the siege of Libla by the Wali Abu Zacaria Aben Gania had meanwhile given renewed courage to the rebels of Algarve; and they, knowing that Cordova was also in revolt, thought it time to attempt the elevation of their banners in that city likewise. Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai therefore sent his commands to Omar Ben Almondar, to the effect that he should take a portion of his forces and proceed to Cordova, whither the general repaired accordingly, being accompanied by his secretary, Muhamad Ben

Yahye El Saltixi, who was called Alcabela, a person in whom he placed great confidence.

Now Ahmed Ben Husein Aben Cosai had the fairest hopes of being early enabled to advance his interests in the city of Cordova, because he was assured by certain of his partizans, Abul Hasen Ben Mumen, for example, and some others who dwelt in the suburb of the Axarquia, and were among the principal inhabitants, that the doing so would be matter of no difficulty.

The general Omar Ben Almondar, with his companion, the Saltixi Alcabela, had meanwhile set themselves on their way, as we have said, with the troops of Xelbe and Libla; but before reaching the place they received intelligence that the crafty Aben Hud Seif-Dolah had forestalled them, having won over and been proclaimed by the citizens, not of Cordova only, but of several other towns.

During this time, the nephew of Aben Gania, Abdallah Ben Muhamad, had committed grievous devastations in the city of Valencia, making frequent incursions thereon from his stronghold of Xativa, and cutting up the fields of the immediate Comarca, with its pleasant and beautiful gardens, all of which caused the people of Valencia not a little vexation and anxiety. They consequently turned their thoughts on the illustrious General Abu Abdelmelik Meruan Abdelaziz, whom they entreated to defend and protect them from the attacks of Abdallah Ben Mohamad: but that noble Xeque excused himself, because he dreaded the inconstancy of the populace, and had no confidence in the principal citizens of Valencia, by whom the desire of the people was laid before him; nay, when Abu Meruan Abdelaziz saw that the populace of Valencia had put to death many of the Almoravides who had remained in their city after the flight therefrom of the Wali Abdallah Ben Muhamad, nephew of Aben Gania, he first concealed himself, and finally fled the place, taking refuge in Xativa, with a large number of his followers. Yet, having arrived there, he was at length persuaded to think of the duty which he owed to the commonwealth, and was prevailed on to resign his private convenience to the general welfare. That change in his opinions was effected by Abdallah Ben Mardanis, with Abu Muhamad Abdallah Ben Ayaub, Alcayde of the frontier, a person of much

credit and authority. These men prevailed on Abdelaziz to accept the perilous command proposed to him by the people of Valencia, and moved by the many instances made to him, he returned to that city, where he was proclaimed on the 3rd day of the moon Xawal, in the year 539.

Abu Abdelmelic Aben Meruan Ben Abdelaziz then entrusted the care of the Comarcas and the frontier to Abdallah Ben Ayadh, the Alcayde, who instantly occupied himself with the security of his own possessions in that district, as well as with that of the domains held by his son-in-law, Abdallah Ben Mardains, all which he laboured to defend against the Lamtumas and other Almoravides who were assembling troops in the land of Albacite, and had fortified themselves in the strongholds of that district.

CHAP. XXXV.—THE INSURRECTIONS OF THE MOSLEMAH ARE CONTINUED.

Now Abu Giafar Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain having succeeded in winning over the people of Cordova for the second time, returned to that city twelve days after he had left it, making his entry on the 10th of Dylhagia, in the year 539. He was then again proclaimed amidst the general rejoicing of the people, while in various cities of Andalusia his kinsmen and partizans likewise declared him to be their lord. His Alchatib or secretary for example, Achil Ben Edris of Ronda namely, caused him to be proclaimed in that city, which was the native place of Achil, who took possession of its inaccessible fortress in Abu Giafar's name, and occupying at the same time the cities of Arcos, Xeris, and Sidonia, he caused the new sovereign to be proclaimed in those places also.

With respect to Murcia, the Alcayde of Cuenca, Abdallah El Trograi, took measures for making himself master of that province, when the news of Abu Giafar's rebellion had reached him, intending to join himself to the party of Hamdain; but on arriving in the city he found that the people had been in a state of insurrection from the 17th day of Ramazan, and were still undecided as to which of

their principal Xeques they should select for their chief, their choice being suspended between Muhamad Ben Abderahman Ben Tahir El Kisi, who was one of the nobles of Tadmir, Abu Muhamad Ben Alhaug Lurki, and Abderahman Ben Giafar Ben Ibrahim. The populace had, indeed, already proclaimed Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain, of Cordova, their king, but desired to appoint Muhamad Ben Alhaug his administrator,—an office which the moderation of his views induced that Noble to decline.

The arrival of the Alcayde of Cuenca, Abdallah Ben Fetâh El Thograi, changed the face of things, and his party named Abu Giafar Ben Abu Giafar, Cadi of Murcia. This man commenced his rule on Tuesday, the 15th of Xawal, in the year 539, and had no sooner done so than his ambitious desire for power induced him to excite the people against the Almoravides, whom they treacherously attacked after having given them assurances of security. That done, and acting under the orders of those who led the party of Abu Giafar Ben Abu Giafar, the populace proclaimed that Cadi their Ameer, appointing Abu Alabas Ben Helal to be Cadi, and Abdallah Ben Fetah El Thograi, Alcayde of the cavalry. There was no man found equal to opposing these measures; and thus this Abdallah, under the pretext of proclaiming Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain, exalted himself, occupying the Alcazar and calling himself the Ameer Anasir Ledinallah: but his sovereignty endured but a very short time, as we shall presently see.

In Valencia, the noble Xeque Abdelmelek Ben Abdelaziz occupied himself with the cares of assembling an army wherewith to march forth against the Almoravides, who had fortified themselves in the Alcazaba of Xatina, and being led by Abdallah, the nephew of Aben Gania, were devastating the country even up to the gates of Valencia, plundering and burning the farms, carrying the women away captive, and causing ruin whithersoever they appeared. Having gathered his forces, therefore, Abdelaziz sallied forth, and on the 28th of Xawal he sat down before Xativa, sending at the same time to demand assistance from the Wali of Murcia, Abu Giafar Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abu Giafar. On the last day of Xawal, the blockade of the place was rendered complete, and the Almoravides

found themselves closely shut up in Xativa, when they prepared to make an obstinate resistance, and defended themselves with much valour.

But now occurred new changes in Murcia, where the party of Abdallah El Thograi and Abderahman Aben Tahir or El Kisi, once more aroused the people to insurrection, and proclaimed the lately exiled monarch, Aben Meruan Aben Hud Seif Dolah. This they did towards the end of the Moon Xawal, in this same year of 539; and the result of the combats which ensued between the partizans of Abu Giafar and those of El Thograi was, that the last-mentioned general was taken prisoner and cast into a dungeon with many of his followers. The Alcadia of the cavalry which had been held by Abdallah El Thograi was then bestowed on Zoamun of Auriola, Aben Tahir and Aben Alhaug leaving the city, whereupon the Fakir Abu Giafar Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abu Giafar El Chuseni assumed the chief authority in the state, making himself master of Tadmir likewise, which he retained during the remainder of that year, and held for the first two months of the year which followed. He maintained, nevertheless, that he had seized the command with no other purpose than that of preserving the liberties of the people against the Almoravides, and made instant preparation for proceeding with his partizans to the aid of Abu Meruan Abdelmelik Ben Abdelaziz, who was then besieging the Lamtunas, and other Almoravide troops in Xativa, as before related.

But Abu Giafar had not well joined the camp of Abdelaziz, and his people had scarcely begun to take their part in the skirmishes which were daily fought around the town, before he received intelligence from Murcia to the effect that a new insurrection had broke forth in that city, where the party of Aben Tahir had found means to excite the people, and had set Abdallah El Thograi at liberty. Thereupon he departed with his cavalry from the siege of Xativa, and by forced marches arrived at Murcia, where he made good his entrance by intelligence with certain of those in authority, and once again obtained possession of the fortress. But he could not get El Thograi into his hands, that leader having secretly fled the place, threatening

vengeance against Abu Giafar, who had no sooner tranquillized the people than he returned with all speed to Xativa.

About the same time there were certain partizans of Abu Giafar Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain dwelling in Granada, who excited the people against the Almoravides, nor could all the authority of the Wali avail to restrain them: that Wali was Aly Ben Abi Bekir, the son of a sister of King Aly Ben Juzef, and was called Aben Finwa, from the name of his mother. The troubles in Algarve were meanwhile fully occupying the General Abu Zacaria Yahye Ben Aly Aben Gania, with the greater part of the Almoravide troops composing his army; a state of things which enabled the Cadi of Granada, Abu Muhamad Ben Simek, to arouse the people against the Almoravides of the garrison, when the tumultuous populace proclaimed Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain their king. Nor could the Almoravide generals restrain the insurrection, but were compelled themselves to retire within the Alcazaba, where they fortified their position as they best could. During the first eight days of the rebellion frequent skirmishes were fought between the Almoravides and the inhabitants, the people making repeated assaults on the fortress, and the valiant Almoravides sallying forth upon them with terrible fury. In one of the sanguinary combats which then ensued, the Cadi Abu Muhamad Ben Simek was slain, when the citizens and party of Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain appointed Abul Hasan Ben Adha his successor. This Abul Hasan was a man of infinite craft, who had found means to stand well with all parties; wherefore, on this occasion also, pursuing the guidance of the passing event, and following the breath of fortune then blowing, he declared against the Almoravides, demanding aid from the rebel Cadies of Cordova, Jaen, and Murcia, whom he called on to assist him in the expulsion of the Almoravide garrison from the Alcazaba of Granada.

CHAP. XXXVI.—OF THE WAR IN AFRICA BETWEEN THE ALMORAVIDES AND THE ALMOHADES, AND OF THE UNHAPPY DEATH OF KING ALY BEN JUZEF.

THE affairs of Africa were meanwhile not in a better condition than those of Spain: King Aly had hoped that the bravery and good fortune of his son Taxfin would avail to restrain the advance of the Almohades, and change the fate of the war which they were waging against him, marching triumphant and victorious through his dominions, and making themselves gradually masters of his territories. During the ten years of implacable and obstinate warfare which he had himself been conducting against that faction, he had not been able to obtain any advantage over them; nay rather it was they who had been the conquerors, since they had taken possession of his towns, and made themselves lords of his provinces one after the other, more especially those wherein dwelt the Cabilas of Ateza, Gebala, and Gieza.

Prince Taxfin passed over into Africa, as we have said, and in his company went the flower of the Almoravide cavalry, whose absence produced an unhappy effect on the condition of Spain, where the perpetual revolts and tribulations above described did indeed most pressingly require the restriction which might have been effected by those troops, and were much aggravated by the departure of the Prince. When the latter arrived at Morocco, he made immediate preparation for marching against the Almohades, and having assembled a considerable force, he went forth to seek the enemy. But his first campaign in Africa had not equal fortune with those of Andalusia, seeing that he was several times defeated with great loss, every day appearing to render his affairs worse. The King Aly, his father, seeing his hopes thus disappointed, and receiving no intelligence but such as brought news of defeat and rout, took the matter so deeply to heart that he fell into heavy sickness, his malady arising solely from the profound sadness and grief of heart with which he was afflicted. The continued addition which he received to these sorrows increased his bodily sufferings, until at last they ended his life, and he died at his Alcazar of Morocco in the moon

Regeb of the year 539,* after having reigned thirty-nine years and seven months. His son was at that time in Aceya, and the death of King Aly was concealed for more than three months.

When at length the decease of the king was made known, his son Taxfin, who had received the oath of allegiance as his successor on the throne of the Almoravides, was proclaimed King of the Moslemah. The new monarch then despatched letters to all his provinces, exhorting the people to continue in their loyalty and obedience to his rule. He likewise wrote to the principal Almoravide generals then commanding in Spain, as for example, to Abu Zacaria Yahye Aben Gania, to Ozman Ben Adha, and to his uncle Ali Ben Abi Bekir, who instantly replied by letters of congratulation on his accession to the throne: from that time forward the name of Taxfin Ben Aly alone was heard in the public prayers of the mosques.

Anxious to restrain the pride of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, Prince of the Almohades, King Taxfin Ben Aly again assembled a large force, with the purpose of marching against him; Abdelmumen having once more had the boldness to descend from the mountains of Tedula and Gomera with a considerable army, laying waste the level country, taking prisoners or slaying the inhabitants, and carrying desolation into every district he entered. This devastating tempest of war had now taken its course towards the sierras which rise between Fez and Telenzen, swift troops of Abdelmumen's light horse making incursions on the Cabilas dwelling on either side of that range, at one and the same time. King Taxfin proceeded, therefore, to the encounter of those ferocious bands, which were falling, as might hungry tigers, on everything that came in their way. Surrounding them with a force of great numbers, the king made a horrible slaughter among them, and the Almohades fled, leaving the field of battle covered with their corpses as an acceptable feast for the beasts and birds of prey. By that defeat the Prince Ab-

* A.D. 1144 or 1145.

delmumen Ben Aly was compelled to retire to the mountains and ascend for shelter to the most inaccessible wilds of his rock-hewn holds, King Taxfin pursuing him through the lowlands and across the spacious plains of the country.

But the Almohades, although fewer in numbers, were yet enabled to defend themselves by the advantages of their position and in their impregnable fastnesses; they were also well supplied with provision, which failed almost entirely in the sandy deserts and would not suffice to the maintenance of so many troops as composed the king's army. The Berbers of that district were besides altogether devoted to Abdelmumen Ben Aly, and would not supply the Almoravides with the means of life.

The leader of the Almohades established his camp for some time in the mountains of Gomera, whence he subsequently passed to those of Telencen and Wadi Tehlit, inducing the Zenete Cabilas who dwelt in those regions to submit themselves to his rule on all his line of march. King Taxfin, who still followed in pursuit, arrived in his turn at Wadi Tehlit, when, as the winter was now far advanced, he there pitched his camp and remained during two months; but the cold was so intense, that his troops were finally compelled to burn the houses and cabins, nay, the very tent-poles and handles of their lances, to save themselves from being frozen to death.

Abdelmumen Ben Aly had meanwhile directed his march towards the mountains of Telencen, pursuing his route along the chain of those hills; King Taxfin also persisting in the pursuit of the Almohade prince; who, having ultimately fixed his camp on the summit of the heights above Telencen, made perpetual descents on the cultivated lands at the base, which he overran with his light cavalry.

Now King Taxfin had requested assistance from the Beni Amat of Zanhaga, whose territories border on the eastern parts of Africa, and from them he received a powerful body of both horse and foot, on whose arrival the king himself, with his principal generals, went forth to give them welcome. Those troops, united to his own, seemed to fill all the level plains as might a swarm of locusts, showing forth the greatness of the Kings of Morocco, and presenting a gladsome, remarkable, and very

amazing sight, which would have been indeed a subject for rejoicing over, had not the destruction of so much grandeur been now so near!

King Taxfin received the generals of the Beni Amat with great honour, expressing his satisfaction at the sight of so magnificent a camp, and discoursing with them of his intentions as regarded attacking the enemy. He furthermore imparted to those chiefs his plans for succouring and fortifying the city of Telencen, which was that most immediately threatened by the Almohades.

Abdelmumen Ben Aly was on his part observing minutely all that passed in the plains beneath him from the tops of his high mountains, feeling no apprehension of that numerous host, and not permitting the infinite number of their many-coloured banners to inspire him with a shade of fear: the clamour of their Atabals and the clangour of their trumpets filled the air, causing the earth to tremble and resounding through the distant mountains, but awakening no terror in the heart of Abdelmumen Ben Aly.

King Taxfin now detached a body of lightly armed cavalry, which directed its march towards that part of the Sierra where the Almohades then were; these troops ascended the hills by Tobad, which is near Telencen, and making their way through numerous defiles, they thus approached the foe. The Almohades, on their part, advanced to the encounter, when a fierce combat was commenced amidst those wild regions, and continued until the Almohades, defeating and dispersing the cavalry of King Taxfin, drove vast numbers of the men over the fearful precipices around them, while the portion of that discomfited body which succeeded in reaching the plains, filled the countless multitude composing the Almoravide force with terror and dismay.

All the ability and bravery of their noble king, with the utmost valour of his distinguished generals, were then found insufficient to restrain the fears of that host, or maintain order among its bands, which fled, vanquished by its own fears rather than by the might of their enemies. But the latter did not fail to profit by that disorderly flight and panic terror; they slew large numbers of the Almo-

ravide troops, on whose rear they hung like famished tigers, whom they drove at the point of their lances across the wide extended plains.

After that unhappy defeat King Aly wrote letters to all his provinces, exhorting them to send him forces for the continuance of the war; nor did the Walies of the kingdom delay the assembling of their strength,—numerous bands arrived from Sigilmesa, Bugia, and other parts: King Taxfin's son, the Ameer Abu Ishac Ibrahim, also coming from Andalusia, with a finely-appointed body, composed of the Andalusian cavalry and the Christians of his guard, in number about four thousand cavaliers.

The king then held a review of all his troops, whom he divided and ranged in squadrons; when the sight of that vast multitude, glittering in arms of all kinds, cavalry and infantry, was such as might well cause admiration, to say nothing of the vast stores of provision, the immense extent of the pavilions, and the flocks of all kinds, with their many herdsmen and shepherds; all which covered so vast a space, that the whole power of the population of Africa might have been supposed to have gathered on that field. The review was held before the gate called Bab Carmedin, and the warriors in their serried squadrons extended over the entire plain, nay, even to the foot of the mountains which were in front of the city. This, as Aben Iza Ben Muza El Magif tells us, was the last effort of the Almoravide princes.

Abdelmumen Ben Aly now moved his camp, directing his march towards Telencen, while King Taxfin, following close on the trace of the Almohades with his innumerable force, endeavoured to compel Abdelmumen to give him battle; nay, the light skirmishers of King Taxfin's army did so greatly disquiet the advance of the Almohade leader, that they compelled him to descend into the plains and take his way towards the country of the Zenetes; but being then attacked in his rear, he resolved to offer battle to the Almoravide army.

Abdelmumen Ben Aly was much inferior in numbers to the enemy he had now to encounter, whether as regarded his cavalry or infantry; he therefore determined, as the best means of defending himself, that his force should be

drawn up in one sole body of a square form, the outer ranks being composed of his bravest warriors, armed with very long lances, which they maintained with their feet and hands. Behind these files of lancers were others, bearing shields and armed with swords, their large round bucklers amply defending them from the cross-bows of the enemy. Within these ranks were, furthermore, two files of soldiers, armed with slings and cross-bows, while in the centre of all there remained a large and ample space, in which Abdelmumen ranged all his cavalry, having been careful to appoint certain places where openings for the sallying forth and re-entering of the horse could be very speedily made, without causing any disorder among the infantry.

And now, as King Taxfin desired nothing so much as the battle, he also made ready his force, and commanded that the Almohades should be attacked by the greater part of his cavalry. And the impetuosity of that Almoravide charge was terrible; but the obstacle presented by the very long lances of their opponents made it impossible for the cavalry of the king to break that strong squadron of the Almohades, while not a few of the horses were pierced through with their riders by those formidable weapons. The Almoravide cavalry were then compelled to turn their horses for the renewal of the charge, when the slings and cross-bows of their enemy poured on them an unceasing storm of missiles, and the cavalry of Abdelmumen, bursting suddenly forth from both flanks of his square, fell heavily on their rear, to the great loss of the Almoravides; but the Almohade horse instantly withdrew to the strong Alcazaba formed to receive them by the serried ranks as before described, thus avoiding the shock of King Taxfin's cavalry, which was so much more powerful than their own. The battle continued after the manner above related during the whole of that sanguinary day, until the loss of the Almoravides was such that they could no longer maintain the fight. All the cavalry was either slain or wounded, and the most valiant of their number counted with the dead; thus the victory and the field remained to Abdelmumen Ben Aly.

King Taxfin then retired with all speed to Telencen, and, become distrustful now of the fortune of his arms, he set

himself diligently to fortify himself within those walls, insomuch that the victorious army of Abdelmumen found the place well garrisoned and defended, when that leader, in his turn, advanced with his force to besiege the city. He commenced the blockade nevertheless, and many obstinate combats ensued; but wearied at length with the continued sallies of the besieged, and the frequent surprises, in which his people suffered great loss, Abdelmumen Ben Aly departed for Medina Uhran, leaving only a portion of his army to maintain the siege of Telencen.

Now King Taxfin had carefully placed the city of Uhran in the best state of defence he could devise, considering it as the principal resource and last asylum remaining to him in the evil condition of his affairs, since he could thence prepare his passage to Spain, if need were that he should cross into that country; nay, the king had written to the Alcayde of Almeria, Abdallah Ben Maimoun, commanding him to hold ten good ships in the great port of Uhran, keeping them constantly prepared for whatever might happen, and holding all ready to sail at a moment's warning. He now found that Abdelmumen Ben Aly had fixed his camp on a hill which rises above Uhran, with the intention of besieging that city and fortress. Taxfin therefore sallied forth from Telencen, broke and scattered the force left by Abdelmumen to besiege the place, and at once proceeded to the relief of his asylum of Uhran.

Arrived within the Comarca of that town, King Taxfin seated his camp within view of his enemies, when various skirmishes ensued, wherein both parties fought bravely, with changing fortunes, but for the most part to the greater loss of the Almoravides.

The author of the "Fen Imamia," speaking on the authority of Aben Matruc Alkisi, relates that King Taxfin, having penetrated and broken the camp of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, succeeded in making good his entrance into Uhran; but perceiving that the siege was likely to be a long one, and finding also that his sallies and surprises, while they exhausted his own people, produced but little effect upon the enemy, he lost all hope of being able longer to maintain himself in the kingdom of Morocco. Thus, despairing and without counsel, he left the city secretly

and by night, with the desire and intention of reaching the well-fortified citadel of the great haven, where he hoped to find the ships prepared to transport him into Spain. The king went forth, then, mounted on a beautiful and spirited mare, called Rahihana,* renowned for her swiftness, and unequalled among all the horses and mares of the numerous stud that he possessed. The night was very dark, and Taxfin, fearful of falling into the hands of his enemies, was proceeding with a troubled mind; thus it chanced, that as he came to a high and steep cliff, it appeared to him in the obscurity that all the ground was level, unless indeed it were that the mare became alarmed at the sound of the sea: be this as it may, the king fell with his horse over the precipice, and so died: his body was found dashed to pieces on the shore of the sea when the light of the following morning appeared, as was that of the mare, which also lay dead beside her master. The remains of the noble Taxfin were then taken to Abdelmumen Ben Aly, who commanded that the body should be nailed to a willow tree, and sent the head to Tinmaul.

The Almoravides were not made acquainted with this event until informed thereof by their enemies themselves; but when the truth was told to them, they lost all hope, and a few days after† Abdelmumen took the city of Uhran by force of arms, entering the same in the month of Muharram of the year 540. Yet he did not obtain possession of the place until after an obstinate resistance, nor would he even then have succeeded, had not the defenders been exhausted by thirst, he having found means to cut off the water by which the city was supplied. Thus, many of the people had died of the torment of thirst, and those who remained were but ill able to endure the toils needful to the defence of the place. According to Yahye Ben Omeira, Abdelmumen entered on the morning of the Easter of Alfitra, when he put to the sword whatever Almoravides he found remaining, with not a few of the inhabitants of Uhran.

* The Arabic writers have not only preserved the name, but the genealogy of Rahihana, whose equal, as they affirm, was never seen among the finest horses of Africa or Arabia.—*De Marlès.*

† Yahye Ben Omeira says three days.—*Condé.*

The reign of King Taxfin, from the departure of his father to the day of his own unhappy death, was two years and two months;* but it has also been affirmed that his death took place in the month of Ramazan of the year 539. The author just quoted furthermore informs us that King Taxfin had caused his son Abu, Ishac Ibrahim, to receive the oath of allegiance as his successor, immediately after his return into Africa from Andalusia.

CHAP. XXXVII.—THE WAR AGAINST THE ALMORAVIDES IN SPAIN IS STILL CONTINUED.

THE insurrection in Andalusia, and the war declared in that country against the Almoravides, was meanwhile continued with implacable hatred. The siege of Xativa was eagerly maintained by Abu Meruan Abdelmelik Ben Abdelaziz, and the city was well defended by Abu Abdallah, the nephew of Aben Gania, with his Almoravide troops; but when the rebel Wali of Murcia, Abu Giafar, arrived at Xativa for the second time in aid of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, the general Abu Abdallah was compelled to retire to the Alcazaba, there to defend himself as he best might from the enemy thus powerfully reinforced. Finally, the Alcayde of the frontiers, Aben Ayadh, also came to the aid of Valencia and Murcia with a very well-appointed body of soldiers from his own govenment; whereupon Abdallah Aben Gania began to treat for the surrender of the place, perceiving clearly that it was not possible for him to hold that fortress any longer. The conditions being accordingly agreed upon, the brave general Abdallah came forth from the city, and left Xativa with all his men; he directed his march towards Almeria, intending to pass over into Majorca in company with his father, unless the affairs of the Almoravides should present a better hope of amelioration than could be then entertained.

Abdallah Aben Gania had no sooner issued from the Alcazar of Xativa, than the city was taken into possession by Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, who then dismissed his

* This is manifestly an oversight, since Aly Ben Juzef died at the close of Regeb in the year 539, the reign of Taxfin was consequently of two months only.—*Tr.*

auxiliaries, all highly satisfied with the rich gifts of horses, arms, and costly vestments, which he had bestowed upon them. Having next placed all things in order within the city, he made his solemn entrance, mounted on a fine dromedary and bearing magnificent vestments, with the most splendid arms: thus surrounded by his Xeques and noble cavaliers, he was proclaimed their sovereign by the people with all possible demonstrations of gladness,—an event which happened in the moon Safer of the year 540. On that occasion Alicant was united to the Amilia of Xativa, and the province was added to the sovereignty or government of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz.

During that same moon of Safer, Abu Giafar Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain returned to Murcia, after having pursued and harassed Abdallah Aben Gania and the Almoravides in their retreat, hanging on their rear and doing them all the injury in his power until they reached the Comarcas of Almeria, where the Almoravide party still retained the upper hand.

In Granada the rebellion was likewise continued, the Almoravides being there also reduced to the Alcazaba; the rebels demanded succour from the people of Cordova, and the Cadi Abul Hassan Ben Adha wrote in that behalf to his kindred and partizans. Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain consequently despatched his nephew Aly Ben Omar Mumamad Adha, known as Omilimad, to the aid of the rebels in Granada, while the Alcayde of Jaen, Aben Gozei, also joined them, marching from that city with such followers as he could get together, reinforced by a thousand cavaliers of the Axarquia. These forces, united to the body of men brought by Abu Giafar of Murcia, formed an imposing camp of twelve thousand horse, with a still greater number of foot-soldiers.

When the Almoravides perceived that this tempest had gathered around them, they saw clearly that the army then menacing them from without, when united with the rebel force already within the city, would give them more than enough to do; they consequently held a council, and the result of their deliberations was a resolve to attack the newly-arrived auxiliaries without delay. At the hour of dawn, therefore, they sallied forth from the Alcazaba, and falling upon the rebel camp, when the generals commanding

were least in expectation of an assault, they attacked the lines with infinite valour, defeating and routing their enemy, after a cruel slaughter of his half-sleeping soldiers. In the hottest part of the combat, the rebel commander of Murcia, Abu Giafar, was slain, when his troops, with the other auxiliaries, dispersed in all directions, each man seeking the safety of his life in a disgraceful and disorderly flight. The victorious Almoravides then returned to their stronghold of the Alcazaba.

When the fugitive relics of Aben Giafar's army arrived in Murcia, they instantly elected the noble Xeque Abderahman Ben Tahir to be their Ameer, proclaiming him at the end of the moon of Rebie Primera in the year 540. At the same period, the Wali Almanzor, who was besieged with his Almoravides in the Alcazaba of Malaga, was also reduced to surrender that citadel by capitulation, when the Ameer Abu Alhakem took possession of the same, and Almanzor Ben Alhaug retired to Murcia, where he arrived in the moon of Rebie Segunda, joining his father, Abu Mohamad Ben Alhaug, who was then in that city.

Now the general Abderahman Ben Tahir entertained a particular affection towards the house of Aben Hud; he therefore invited Seif-Dolah Aben Hud to retake possession of the throne, calling himself Naib or Viceroy of Murcia only; the Alcaydia he gave to his brother Abu Becar, and having regained possession of the Alcazar, he wrote to the King Aben Hud Seif-Dolah, urging his immediate arrival: but when this determination was made known, Abu Mohamad Ben Alhaug left the city with Aben Suar and others of the principal cavaliers of his party, repairing with those followers to Cordova.

The Ameer Abu Giafar Hamdain Ben Muhamad Ben Hamdain received Muhamad Ben Alhaug with much cordiality, supplying him shortly afterwards with a carefully chosen body of troops, under the command of his cousin Alfolfoli and his nephew Omilimad; when Muhamad, thus reinforced, returned to Murcia, with intent to expel the Xeque Abderahman Aben Tahir, and hoping to re-establish his own party in the city.

Then Abderahman, fearing that he was not sufficiently powerful to resist those troops, endeavoured to win the

Alcayde of the frontiers of Valencia, Abu Muhamad Ben Ayadh, to his party, hoping by his aid to maintain and defend the city; wherefore he sent letters exhorting him to repair thither without delay, if he still valued the name of a friend to the King, even Aben Hud Seif Dolah. Now Abu Muhamad was in his heart inclined to the opposite party, but concealing that fact from Abderahman Aben Tahir he departed with all speed on the receipt of his letters, and set himself on the way to Murcia. Having reached Auriola, however, he was met on approaching the town by the Alcayde of the same, Zaonoun, who was also of the party opposed to Seif-Dolah, and who now proclaimed Abu Muhamad Ben Ayahd himself as Ameer of that city and its territory. Many of the chief persons of Murcia subsequently arrived at Auriola, when these men, joining Abu Muhamad Ben Ayadh, enkindled the desire for sovereignty within his heart, and encouraged him to repair as ruler to Murcia itself, where they proclaimed him Ameer of the place, before any of these things had been made known to the Xeque Abderahman Ben Tahir, who was far from anticipating such a result, and had even sent forth his kinsmen and principal cavaliers to meet Abu Muhamad, when intelligence of his approach was brought to him. A vast concourse of the people also went forth to meet Aben Ayadh, who, comporting himself as their sovereign, took up his abode in the Alcazar Quibir, where he was not expected, nor had any preparations been made to receive him.

These things took place on the 10th of the moon of Guimada Primera in the year 540, and when Abderahman Aben Tahir was informed thereof, he retired from the Alcazar of Dar Saguir, in which he had previously dwelt, to his own private house. There were not wanting men who sought to persuade Abu Muhamad Aben Ayadh to take the life of Abderahman; but the virtues and excellence of that noble Xeque were perfectly known to Aben Ayadh, who refrained from shedding his blood. Thus was Aben Tahir dispossessed of his Waliazgo or government by his own auxiliary, after a possession of the same which did not amount to more than fifty days.

And now, such is the inconstancy of popular favour, the people of Valencia became weary of their Ameer, Abu

Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, and him whom they had shortly before solicited to become their lord with eager anxiety, they instantly afterwards began to abhor; his government and proceedings having become insufferable to them. Thereupon the principal inhabitants of Valencia, with the Alcaydes of Alicant, Gezira, Xucar, and Murbitur, sent letters to Abu Muhamad Aben Ayadh, the Alcayde of the frontiers, who was then at Murcia, and master of that city, exhorting him to repair with all diligence to Valencia, there to assume the reins of government, since the state was in a condition of dangerous disunion, and destitute of a chief to rule it as was needful.

But this was not done so secretly as that no report of the same should reach the ears of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, who earnestly desired to avert the danger, and punish those who had given rise to the troubles he beheld approaching; yet he found it impossible to do so; the evil having already gone too far: discontent and the desire for a new Ameer had become general, and certain precautions, taken by Abu Meruan, becoming instantly known, the people rose in rebellion, and he was compelled to retire from the Alcazar, concealing himself in the house of one of his friends until he could find means to escape from the city. Nor could he effect that escape by any other method than the perilous and painful one of being let down from the city wall, which was done on Tuesday, the 26th, or as other authorities say, on the 25th of Giumada Primera.

Having no other attendant than one sole guide, Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz was unhappily led astray by this man, and having lost his way, when among the mountains of Almeria, he fell into the hands of the Alcayde Muhamad Ben Maymoun, to whom he was personally known. That ruler, having apprehended him, treated the fallen Ameer as a rebel, and sent him in chains to Abdallah, the nephew of Aben Gania, who rejoiced greatly at finding Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz in his power. He then took his prisoner, still in chains, into various parts of Valencia, Almeria, and Xativa, leading him, at a word, whithersoever he went himself, even to the causing him to be carried about in the train of the numerous incursions made by his troops on the neighbouring Comarcas. Yet he could not resolve to take

his life, and finally carried him in his company to the island of Majorca.

It has been related of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, that when he left Valencia by night and as a fugitive, he fled to Colbira, but instantly returned in disguise to Valencia, where he remained in his own private residence until discovered by some one of the many who were carefully seeking him, when he once more fled secretly by night, then directing his steps towards Murcia. It is added that his movements were eagerly followed by Juzef Ben Helaul, who sought to take him prisoner; but Abdelaziz succeeded in eluding his intended captor, who finally lost all trace of him. The hunted man then remained in Murcia three days, when he departed with a guide who misled him among the mountains of Almeria, where he was found by the cavalry of Maymoun, who gave him up to Abdallah Aben Gania, the nephew, as above related, but the family and partizans of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz subsequently took vengeance on the Alcayde Muhamad Ben Maymoun for his want of generosity, treating him no otherwise than they would have done had he put their chief and kinsman to death.

When the people of Valencia were made acquainted with the flight of their Ameer Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, they proclaimed Abdallah Ben Muhamad Ben Said Ben Mardanis, who had been viceroy or Naib of Aben Ayadh, to be their sovereign, appointing him the Alcazar of Valencia for his residence. In the end of that same moon of Giumada Primera, Aben Ayadh himself, who had received intelligence of that proclamation on his way, arrived in the city of Valencia, and having remained there and in the Comarcas for some days, making arrangements for the defence of the frontiers, he then returned to Murcia, leaving as his Naib or lieutenant Abu Muhamad Ben Sad, uncle of Abdallah Ben Sad, and known as Sad of Albaceta, as we shall see hereafter. Now Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Gubeir, father of Abu Husein the Wise, who defended the Alcazar of Valencia, was taken prisoner by the people of Aben Ayadh, who sent him in chains to the Castle of Maternis, where he was shut up in one of the towers. It is true that he soon purchased his freedom at the price of three thousand doubloons, but they

deprived him of his books, which was the cause of infinite grief to Ahmed Ben Gubeir. He then retired to Xativa, where he was subsequently taken captive a second time by the people of Aben Gania, with other partisans of Abu Meruan Ben Abdelaziz. Ahmed Ben Gubeir was then thrown into a dark prison where he could not distinguish day from night, and where he remained until taken by his captors to Majorca, as we shall relate hereafter.

When Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain had succeeded in prevailing on the light-minded and inconstant people of Cordova to expel the King Aben Hud Seif Dolah from that city, the last-mentioned prince departed for Jaen, where his partisans were found daily to increase their numbers. He found means also to win the heart of Aben Gozei, Alcayde of Jaen, who was anxious to avenge the affront which he had received from the Almoravides, when they had defeated his troops and caused him to fail in his designs on Granada; wherefore he now offered to proceed against them in company with Aben Hud Seif Dolah. Having reached Granada accordingly, they entered the city by the Bab* Morun, when the Cadi Aben Adha came forth to meet them, appearing on foot to do Seif Dolah the greater honour. He saluted the latter with much respect, and entertained him magnificently, together with his son, Amad Dolah.

Now it chanced that Seif Dolah on that occasion complained of thirst and desired water, when the cup was served to him by Aben Ahda himself; but as the prince was raising that beaker to his lips he was interrupted by an Alima who stood near, and who exclaimed, "Drink not, Oh Sultan, for the cup hath been prepared for thee." Thereupon Seif Dolah set the goblet down, and did not drink, but Aben Adha, who had none but good intentions towards him, and felt ashamed of this accusation, took the goblet and drank the contents thereof, to the end that Seif Dolah might be convinced of his uprightness of purpose in that matter; and he did in effect remove all suspicion from himself, but the cup had indeed been prepared with evil designs, and that same night Aben Adha died, a poison of a bitter-sweet flavour having been mingled with the

* Bab: gate.

drink, which was thus made to taste like a preparation of sugar and oranges: it has not however been clearly ascertained whether this had happened by accident or had been done maliciously, with intent to deprive of life whomsoever of the race of Aben Hud should taste thereof.

This circumstance of the poisoned cup caused Seif Dolah Aben Hud to feel so much suspicion of the inconstant people, that he would not consent to remain in the city, although they all gave signs of infinite delight at his appearance, the more important of the citizens more particularly. The prince determined, nevertheless, to abide in the gardens near Granada, and causing a magnificent pavilion to be erected for him, he remained there for ten days. That time having elapsed, he began his attack on the Alcazaba Alhambra, which was held by the Almoravides, who defended themselves against the troops of Seif Dolah and those of the city with infinite bravery.

Many sanguinary combats then took place, and each day saw the destruction of numerous lives on either side. On the eighth day of these skirmishes the contest was a more particularly obstinate one; but Seif Dolah and those of Granada were eventually repulsed by the Almoravides, who made a fearful carnage among them.

On that day, Amad Dolah, the son of Seif Dolah Aben Hud, was grievously wounded, and being taken prisoner by the Almoravides was carried into the Alcazaba, where he that night died of his wounds. The captors then wrapped his body in camphor, and sent it for interment to the father of the slain prince, even Seif Dolah Aben Hud, having first placed it in a precious casket of fine wood, adorned with fringes of gold, and filled with the richest perfumes.

Seif Dolah did not remain more than a month in Granada, since he perceived that the people had become weary of the toilsome labours which they were enduring, with so little profit from the struggle, the horrors of which were all the more sensibly felt because the combats were delivered in the heart of the city itself. He therefore struck his camp one night and departed for Jaen, leaving Granada to be governed by Abu Hassan Ben Adha, the son of him who had died of the poisoned cup, as above related. On Seif Dolah's departure, the people of Granada commenced negociations with

the Almoravides, and the conditions having been agreed to on the part of the principal officers among the latter, those troops came forth from the fortress and retired to Almunecaub, the port of Elvira, where they were most conveniently placed for eventually crossing into Africa.

CHAP. XXXVIII.—WARS AMONG THE MOSLEMAH OF SPAIN STILL CONTINUED.

Now Seif Dolah Aben Hud, after his departure from Granada, continued his stay in Jaen for some time longer, and he there received envoys from Murcia, offering him allegiance in the name of the city, and requesting that he would be pleased to repair thither. He accordingly mounted his horse without delay, and accompanied by many noble cavaliers of his party, set forth in that direction, despatching letters at the same time to his friend Abu Muhamad Abeu Ayadh, to give the latter notice of the day when he proposed to arrive. It was indeed to his old and well-tried friendship that Sief Dolah was indebted for his proclamation as Ameer of Murcia, secret intelligence having ever been maintained between them.

The prince made his entry into Murcia on Friday, the 18th day of the moon Regib, in the year 540, Aben Muhamad Aben Ayadh having gone forth to meet him with the cavalry of Murcia, and accompanied by his son Abu Becar. The day was held in the city as one of high festival, and Seif Dolah was proclaimed amidst manifestations of infinite rejoicing by the people, who there gave ready obedience to the will of Abu Muhamad Aben Ayadh. But the new sovereign did not remain more than a few days in Murcia, after which he departed for Valencia in company with Aben Ayadh, who had caused all to be prepared for his proclamation in that city also, where it was made accordingly under the most festive auspices, and amidst the acclamations of a vast concourse of the people. Shortly afterwards Seif Dolah and his friend repaired to Denia, where that prince was likewise proclaimed: they then repaired in company to Murcia, where the Ameer Seif Dolah Aben Hud took up

his abode in the Alcazarquibir, and the General Aben Ayadh in the Alcazarquibir, but as respecting the government everything was done by Aben Ayadh, although in the name of the Ameer Sief Dolah Aben Hud.

No long time had elapsed after these events before intelligence from the frontiers was received in Murcia to the effect that Abdallah Ben Fetah El Thograi, Alcayde of Cuenca, was making incursions on the territory of Xativa, the Christians, whom he had invited to his assistance, cutting up the fields and devastating the district in all directions. Then followed letters from the Naib of Valencia, Abdallah Aben Sad, informing Seif Dolah that El Thograi and his ally, Aladfuns* of the Tagus, were holding the city of Xativa in close siege. Whereupon the Ameer and his Wali Aben Ayadh assembled the cavalry of Murcia, Lorca, and Alicant, without the delay of an hour, and wrote to the Naib of Valencia, desiring him also to sally forth with his people, and join them in proceeding against the aggressors.

When the Christians were informed of these movements they struck their camp, not considering it advisable to wait the junction of Murcia and Valencia, whose troops they might hope to defeat with more certainty if they could take them while separate. They thus desired first to encounter the troops of Murcia, whom they dreaded more than those of Valencia, and when they should have given them battle then to return and meet the forces of Valencia. But the swiftness and diligence of the Valencian commanders were such that they brought up their troops a day earlier than it was supposed possible for them to do so, and joined those of Murcia by so much the more rapidly than had been anticipated by either host.

The encounter which then ensued took place in the plains of Albacite at a place called the field of Lug, which is in the vicinity of Chingila. The battle commenced with the first hour of day, and was a very obstinate one, both parties fighting with equal fury, and exhibiting a cruel rage, which made them appear less like men than wild beasts, tearing each other to pieces. On that field there contended the most able and valiant warriors, whether of the Moslemah or

* Alfonso.

Christian faith, the implacable hatred of both nations being there made manifest, and the bravery as well as constancy of the well-experienced combatants on either side being equally conspicuous.

And now in the thickest of the fight the valiant Ameer Seif Dolah Aben Hud fell mortally wounded by the thrust of a lance: his sword, waving in the hottest of the struggle, had left the noble breast to be pierced through, and with rivers of his heart's blood the exalted soul passed forth by that issue. Fighting like a raging lion among the foremost there also fell Abdallah Aben Sad, Naib of Valencia, nephew of Muhamad Aben Sad Ben Mardanis, Naib of Murcia. With the loss of those two illustrious leaders sank the spirit of the Moslemah both of Murcia and Valencia. In vain did the heroic valour of the Wali Abu Muhamad Aben Ayadh make giant efforts to maintain the combat; he could not prevent his people from resigning the field to their enemy, and the flight of the vanquished soldiers was protected only by the shadows of the night, which alone availed to give a truce to the cruel slaughter. Aben Ayadh thus escaped with the relics of the army, and by some of the authorities we are told that Aben Hud also left the field alive, but died in the night from the loss of blood which his many wounds occasioned. That defeat of the Moslemah took place on a Giuma, or Friday, which was the 20th of the moon Xaban, in the year 540, or, as other writers of the period say, on a Saturday in the same moon.

After this battle, Abdallah El Thograi, with his allies, proceeded to besiege the city of Murcia, where the government had been left to Muhamad Ben Sad Aben Mardanis, who was Naib thereof. But that general would not await the foe within the walls, and with the small force at his command he sallied forth against El Thograi, to whom he offered battle before the city, and fought with infinito valour. The troops of Aben Sad were nevertheless defeated by the greater number of their enemies, and many perished at the hands of the Infidels, who followed eagerly in pursuit of the flying. Aben Sad himself escaped solely by the fleetness of his horse, and took refuge with a few of his people in Alicant.

Abdallah El Thograi then gained possession of Murcia,

which he entered in the first days of the moon Dylhagia in the year 540. He took much pains to win the friendship of the citizens by his favourable treatment of them, and laboured earnestly to renew his former alliance with their principal men; but he could not prevent the Christians who were his auxiliaries from forming part of the force which then garrisoned Murcia, although he greatly desired to do so, and their presence was a thing by which the inhabitants were all much dissatisfied.

The Wali Muhamad Aben Ayadh was meanwhile thinking only of vengeance, and occupied himself eagerly in the assemblage of troops with which he might once more make head against the foe.

On the side of Algarve, Ahmed Ben Husein Aben Cosai was pursuing his conquests, and proceeding from Calat Mertula, he had made himself master of the greater portion of the district, nearly all the towns having submitted themselves to his rule. When this leader was informed of the successes obtained by Abdelmumen Ben Aly and his Almohades in Africa, and heard of the death of King Taxfin at Uhran, he sent letters and messages to the Prince of the Almohades, Abdelmumen, giving him an account of the revolutions which had taken place in Spain, and relating the manner in which he had himself obtained possession of a certain part of Andalusia while acting against the Almoravides, whom he declared to be heretics and bad Moslemah. He furthermore made profession of his own adhesion to the opinions of El Mehedi and the doctrines of Alzagali, and concluded by proffering his allegiance to Abdelmumen Ben Aly, whom he invited to enter Andalusia and make himself master of that country. Highly satisfied with these proceedings on the part of Ahmed Ben Husein Aben Cosai, Abdelmumen replied by appointing that leader to be his Wali of Algarve; and this was done in the moon of Rebie Segunda in the year 540.

At the same time, the general of the Almoravides, Abu Zacaria Yahye Aben Gania, being made acquainted with the evil condition of his sovereign's affairs in Africa, continued to do his utmost for the support of the tottering empire of the latter in Andalusia, not only by force of arms, but also by the exercise of the most consummate prudence. He passed

through all the provinces still remaining true to the house of Juzef, King of the Moslemah, exhorting the people to union and obedience to their legitimate sovereigns, nor failing to employ rigorous measures wherever he found persuasions of no avail. By these means Abu Zacaria maintained many of the principal cities in their allegiance to their king; but perceiving that in despite of all his efforts the rebels were nevertheless gaining ground, those of the Axarquia and Algarve* more especially being very powerful, he resolved at length to seek alliances among the Christians: he furthermore endeavoured to weaken the force of the rebel bands by sowing the seeds of dissension among their leaders; and having heard that Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai had written to the Almohades, proposing to subject himself to their allegiance, as related above, he took occasion from the reward received by Aben Cosai on being named the Wali of Algarve, to excite against him the envy of his partizans, Mohamad Ben Sid-Ray and Omar Ben Aimondar; having caused it to be intimated to those generals that it was now time they should look about for themselves, since Aben Cosai thought only of his own aggrandizement, and aimed at nothing less than securing the sovereignty of the state for himself. Aben Gania added that Aben Cosai was manifestly attacking the liberties of them all, since he was labouring to bring the fierce Almohades into Spain, thus renewing the misfortunes which the Andalusian princes and generals had endured from the coming of the Almoravides, with this difference, that Juzef Ben Taxfin had been summoned to redeem the Moslemah from the chains drawn around them by the tyrant Alfonso, while Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai could assign no motive so laudable for the evil course which he was at that moment pursuing, but was in fact moved solely by an unbridled desire of sovereignty, which was now leading him to invite to Spain those ruthless Almohades by whom such vast rivers of Moslemah blood had already been shed in Africa. Aben Gania concluded by declaring that for himself he sought only to maintain without a blemish the honourable charge of General and Protector of the Frontiers, which he

* The South and East.

had held so long, and, continuing in the path of God, to be the true servant of Islam, even to the death; but as regarded the generals whom he addressed, they were assured that he desired nothing more than to open their eyes to the dangers they were incurring from the ambition of Aben Cosai.

The two generals to whom Abu Zacaria Aben Gania directed these reasonings were men of noble minds and generous hearts; the fires of emulation, not wholly extinguished within them, were rekindled, and they began to observe the government of Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai with disapproval. The alliances he had formed, and the treaties he had concluded of his own authority, were made the pretext for an open rupture, which was presently followed by each of the generals leading his troops against their late chief, Aben Cosai.

That Wali, the better to defend himself from their attack, then invited to his aid the tyrant Aben Errik, Lord of Colymbria, who lost no time in repairing to Andalusia, when Aben Cosai and himself entered the territories of Beja and Merida in company with the Christian forces, committing their accustomed ravages in all the districts within their reach. They were opposed by Muhamad Sid Ray and Omar Ben Almondar, when many sanguinary battles were delivered between those forces; but the troops of Ahmed Cosai were defeated, and he was compelled to retire to his fortress of Calat Mertula. These events took place in the moon Xaban 540, and the cavaliers of Aben Errik then departing, received rich gifts from Aben Cosai, both of arms and horses. But the proceedings of the latter were as those of a servant who dares not move an eyelash without the consent of others, and awaits the command of his master for every action. This gave occasion for his enemies to bring him into contempt, and he became the scorn as well as the abhorrence of the people, insomuch that his troops would no longer defend him, but were disposed, on the contrary, to promote the designs of those who sought his ruin. A popular insurrection was thus easily excited against Aben Cosai, when the generals attacking him found means to possess themselves of his fortress of Calat Mertula, which done, they hurried to the

Alcazar of Axaregib, where he then dwelt, and deposing Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai, they proclaimed Muhamad Sid Ray governor in his stead. Then the latter seized Aben Cosai and imprisoned him in Medina Beja; but in the meantime a partizan of the fallen chief, Abdallah Ben Aly Ben Samail, had raised his banner and did his utmost to support the claims of his chief. This general Abdallah succeeded in obtaining possession of Beja, and at once set Aben Cosai free, when Muhamad Sid Ray was compelled to fly in his turn, and took refuge in Seville.

CHAP. XXXIX.—Of the war between the Almoravides and Almohades.

The sanguinary struggle so long maintained in Africa between the Almoravides and Almohades was meanwhile continued without ceasing. The Mexuar, or Great Council of Morocco, had proclaimed the son of King Taxfin, even Ibrahim Abu Ishak, so soon as they had been made acquainted with his father's unhappy death; seeing that King Taxfin, becoming distrustful of his fortune, had caused him to receive the oath of allegiance as future sovereign of the empire, and had sent him from Uhran to Morocco, for the greater safety, but a short time before his own death. The ceremony of Ibrahim's inauguration had in fact taken place about a month prior to that event, and all the nobles of Lamtuna had then willingly taken the oath of allegiance to him.

There was, nevertheless, one person who now opposed the solemn proclamation and acknowledgment of Ibrahim as King of Morocco; this was his uncle and the brother of his father, even Ishak Ben Aly, who refused him obedience, and demanded that he should himself be proclaimed king. Nor were there wanting Almoravide nobles who supported that fatal division in the already tottering empire of Morocco, as if they desired to give a new impulse to the fall of the state, now imminent, and had determined to hasten the approach of its total ruin, although they could not but be aware that Abdelmumen Ben Aly never laid the arms from

his victorious hands, but was triumphantly proceeding through the provinces, of which he subjugated the towns and reduced the inhabitants to his obedience.

Thus the Prince of the Almoravides had no sooner taken possession of Uhran, wherein he made a terrible carnage, than he occupied the stronghold of Marsaelquiver, and then striking his camp, departed to lay siege to Telencen. Here he subjected the city to many rude assaults, and after pressing it closely for a considerable time, entered it finally by force of arms, when, as the defence had been an obstinate one, Abdelmumen avenged himself by causing all the living souls that appeared before the eyes of his ferocious soldiery to be put to the sword. The carnage was of a truth most frightful; nay, it is affirmed by Isa Ben Ahmed Musa that one hundred thousand creatures of Allah were slaughtered on that day of horror, when Abdelmumen Ben Aly stormed the town: he adds that all the peaceful citizens, as well as the warriors, perished; that Telencen was given up to the plunder of the ruffian soldiery, who committed robberies and murders unrestrained, until they had well-nigh appeased their insatiable covetousness, as well as satisfied their inhuman cruelty.

In Telencen Abdelmumen made his abode during seven months, but despatched his generals to the siege of Medina Fez without loss of time. Those leaders then obtained possession of Mezquinez by treaty, and having done so, they sat themselves down before the city of Fez.

Now the governor of Medina Fez was a son of King Aly, and was called Yahye Abu Becar: he had a distinguished general for his Amil, or Administrator of Affairs, an Andalusian, named Abdallah Ben Chayar El Jaeni, known also as Aben Aly of Jaen. This brave leader defended the city well; he made perpetual sallies with strong and carefully chosen troops of cavalry, giving frequent surprises also to the Almohade camp, and supplying his enemies with sufficient occupation. Wherefore Abdelmumen Ben Aly, perceiving that the siege of Medina Fez was much prolonged, determined to use a stratagem, which availed him more than all the machines of war wherewith he had previously assailed the place. Felling a large quantity of trees, and getting together vast beams of wood, he caused

a strong dam to be constructed across the river which traversed the city. Abdelmumen was much aided in the purpose he had conceived by the natural disposition of the country, since the river approaches Fez by a narrow valley ending in a closely restricted channel. By the strong wall thus erected, the Almohade prince succeeded in repressing the current, and a vast pond or lake being gradually formed, was at length found capable of bearing great barks, and had all the appearance of a sea. When the waters had now attained their highest point and began to seek new channels by pouring themselves over the neighbouring fields, Abdelmumen caused the dam to be suddenly destroyed, when the whole force of that horrible inundation fell with a frightful impetuosity on the city walls, a great portion of the upper part of which they carried away, and flooding the town, destroyed the bridges, the public edifices and the private dwellings of the citizens, in vast numbers.

This catastrophe took place at the hour of dawn, and on the evening preceding that night the Wali of Medina Fez, even Yahye Aben Aly, uncle of the King, had celebrated his nuptials with a beautiful damsel, but of whom the general Abdallah El Jaeni was also unhappily much enamoured, and therefore considered himself heavily aggrieved by those nuptials. Abdallah was nevertheless true to his duty on that occasion, and hearing the fearful rumour of waters, while he felt the earth tremble at the same moment beneath his feet, he knew that the pent up river must have burst its bounds. Wherefore, hastening to the nearest gate with such force as he could assemble, he commanded a portion of the troops to mount the ruins and defend the broken summit of the walls, while he marched forth with the remainder to attack the enemy when the latter was least expecting an assault. The depth and fury of the stream was meanwhile preventing the Almohades from entering the city as they had hoped to do, while they were also compelled to accept the battle which El Jaeni with so much valour had gone forth to offer them. Thus Abdelmumen Ben Aly did not then obtain the triumph which he had expected. The river had destroyed more than a thousand houses, with several mosques and other important buildings, yet the city maintained its own, and still con-

tinued to occupy the besiegers in daily skirmishes, wherein they fought with varying fortunes.

El Jaeni had meanwhile not forgotten the grief inflicted on him by the loss of the lady whom he loved, nor had the desperation of his jealousy abated, when a new cause of displeasure supervened, making his ill-repressed anger to burst forth with ungovernable violence; and the matter was on this wise. The Ameer Yahye Abu Becar Ben Aly had demanded the accounts relating to a certain sum of money, which he required the general Abdallah to pay over to him at once; but El Jaeni excused himself by alleging the urgent demand made on his attention by the defence of the city: then, as one word followed another, both parties became heated and injurious words were exchanged. El Jaeni then commenced a negociation with Abdelmumen Ben Aly for the surrender of Medina Fez, and after a certain time threw open the gates of the city to that leader, when the King of the Almohades was proclaimed therein. This event took place on the evening of Wednesday, the 14th of the moon Dilcada, in the year 540.

Filled with terror at the ruin which had thus ensued, the Ameer Yahye Abu Becar Ben Aly fled with his family and household, directing his steps towards Tangiers, where he took ship and embarked for Andalusia. Abdallah El Jaeni was meanwhile treated with much honour by the Vizier of Abdelmumen, Abu Giafar Ahmed Ben Giafar Ben Atia, who was a native of Andalusia, and had come from Camarola, near Tartuxa, which is in the eastern part of that country. Abu Giafar had been Vizier six-and-thirty years; he had a brother, called Abu Akil Atia, who was but three-and-twenty, yet the latter, as well as himself, was in the highest favour with Abdelmumen, and both now gave proof of great friendship for El Jaeni: he on his part wrote elegant verses in praise of Abu Giafar, whose fortunes we shall relate hereafter.

In the commencement of the year 541, and towards the middle of the moon of Muharram, the city of Agmat was likewise surrendered to Abdelmumen Ben Aly by capitulation, and that sovereign being now free from his labours as regarded Medina-Fez, despatched his troops to the siege of Sale and Mekinesa. To the last-named place then pro-

ceeded six thousand horsemen from the Cabilas of Rukan, Mikilita, Zaneta, and Quiznaya, who fixed their camp before the same, and to defend themselves from the frequent sallies of the besiegers, they constructed a wall around the city, so that none could come forth from it at any point, certain gates alone excepted, and at these the Almohades kept a strong guard, constantly watching them both day and night. The besiegers furthermore did not fail to enter these enclosures occasionally to attack the brave inhabitants of Agmat, who fought valiantly, but with various fortunes.

Abdelmumen was himself present at this siege; but perceiving that it was likely to be much prolonged, he made all needful dispositions for the continuance of the conflict, and having effected that purpose, departed with his principal cavaliers to invest Sale. Here the inhabitants came forth to receive him so soon as they perceived his banners and before he had found time to fix his pavilion. They proffered him their allegiance with one accord, and even surrendered the Alcazaba to his pleasure on that same day. This was a beautiful and very strong fortress, which the King Taxfin had constructed in the suburb of Sale.

CHAP. XL.—THE ALMOHADES PASS THE SEA AND ENTER SPAIN. THEIR FIRST CONQUESTS IN THAT COUNTRY. FALL OF THE EMPIRE OF THE ALMORAVIDES.

His conquest of Almagreb being thus so happily completed, Abdelmumen now made preparation for two campaigns with which his thoughts had long been much occupied, and for these he assembled a large army, with vast stores of arms, horses, provisions, and machines of war—all things that could be required, at a word, for the due promotion of a warlike purpose. He then commanded his general Abu Amraun Muza Ben Said to pass the strait and enter Andalusia with ten thousand cavalry, and double that number of foot-soldiers, considering the revolutions and civil wars in that country to present him with a favourable opportunity for making himself master of the kingdom. Abdelmumen had already provided ships for the embarkation of his troops at Tangiers and Cazar Algez, and in the mean

of Dylhagia 540 the preparations were already much advanced for that purpose. Towards the close of Dylhagia, therefore, the passage was happily accomplished, and the Almohade force made good its landing on the coast near Algezira Alhadra, when they commenced the siege of that city, which soon yielded to their arms, seeing that the Almoravides by whom it was defended could not hope for aid from any quarter: wherefore they did not delay to propose the conditions of surrender. But before these had been agreed on, and while Aben Amraun was still besieging Algezira, there came to his aid a large body of cavalry from Algarve, brought thither by Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai, whom Abu Amraun went forth to meet, and received with much distinction. Then the Almoravide garrison, not hoping favourable conditions, and perceiving well that the city could not maintain a protracted defence, sallied forth with despair in their hearts, burst through the camp of the Almohades, and making themselves a road with the point of their lances, fled with all speed towards Medina Seville.

In the moon of Muharram of the year 541, the Almohades entered Algezira, when the inhabitants of the city were not ill-treated, because they had made no resistance. The Almohade force then directed its march on Gebal Taric,* which surrendered in like manner, after the example of Algezira, when the troops passed on towards Xeris, where they fixed their camp with intention to besiege the city. But during the same day there came forth form Xeris the Alcayde of the place, Abul Camar, who was of the family of Aben Gania, accompanied by one hundred noble cavaliers, and all proceeded in peace towards the camp of the Almohades, to whose sovereign they offered their allegiance in the name of the whole city; placing themselves under his shelter and protection, and taking the oath of fidelity and allegiance.

Abu Amraun immediately wrote an account of these victories and fortunate events to his master, 'Aldelmumen Ben Aly; he insisted much on the ready submission of the Xerezanos, whereat the King Abdelmumen was greatly rejoiced, and sent letters to the city of Xeris, expressing his

* Gebal Taric: Gibraltar.

satisfaction for that she had been the first town of Andalusia to accept his rule, and assuring the inhabitants of his protection. He then commanded that the Ayuntamiento, or assembled council of that place, should take precedence of all others in the Cortes during the solemn ceremonies observed every year at the public celebration of the Azala; adding that the magistrates thereof should be called the Adelantados,* or Presidents of Xeris, with the honour of being always the first to salute the king and present their requests or representations before any other city,—privileges which were all maintained to the men of Xeres while the dynasty of the Almohades endured.

In the south of Spain the civil war was meanwhile continued with unabated fury. On receiving intelligence of the victory obtained before Murcia by Abdallah El Thograi over his Naib Muhamad Ben Sad, and of the entry of El Thograi into that city, Muhamad Aben Ayadh prepared to take vengeance; he collected a powerful army from the territories of Valencia, Lorca, and Alicant, with which he then proceeded to seek his enemy in the city of Murcia.

Now the inhabitants of that place were much dissatisfied with Abdallah El Thograi, because he still retained his Christian allies in his company, and Aben Ayadh perceived that to obtain possession of Murcia under these circumstances he would need to endure no heavier toil than that of scaling a wall or forcing a gate. He therefore attacked the place, which he entered sword in hand; but the inhabitants themselves at once took arms against the Christians and their allies the Moslemah of Axarquia, who were those led by Abdallah El Thograi, and the latter having at once to defend the walls and to meet the inhabitants who attacked them within, could do nothing available for their own safety, insomuch that they were defeated by the bands of both their assailants. Abdallah El Thograi himself having fought at the gate of the city like the valiant leader he had ever been accounted, perceived the insurrection of the people, and unable to rally his own troops from their disorder and confusion, he fled with certain of his cavaliers

* Adelantados: the foremost or pre-eminent.

and such of his allies as had joined him in the battle, departing from the city by the gate called that of Africa.

But as El Thograi was leaving the walls behind him, a stone cast from the same struck and wounded the head of his horse, when the animal, terrified or stunned, fell with his rider into the river. There, a certain Aben Fedar cut down the fallen general, without any one of his companions appearing to take notice of what was occurring, each being occupied with the care of his proper safety. He who had killed El Thograi in the river had thus full leisure to take off the head of his victim, which he carried to the General Muhamad Aben Ayadh, who rejoiced much at the sight thereof, and paid him who had brought it very largely.

That entrance of Aben Ayadh into Murcia took place on the 7th day of Regeb, in the year 541. The cavaliers of Murcia, who had openly favoured the party of Aben Ayadh, were treated with much honour by that general, and he pardoned those who had followed the banners of his enemy, but he gave no quarter to such of the Christians as fell into his hands, and commanded that all should be decapitated. Aben Ayadh was then proclaimed for the second time Ameer of Murcia and of all the Axarquia of Spain.

In Africa, meanwhile, the second campaign projected by Abdelmumen Ben Aly, King of the Almohades, was opened by himself in person, when his march was directed on Morocco, and he commenced the siege of that court and city with a well-appointed force. He had fixed his camp on a height situate to the west of the city, and called Gebel Gelez, which has no great elevation, and is in fact but a hillock. Here Abdelmumen commenced the erection of dwellings for the shelter of his troops, and believing that the siege of Morocco would be a protracted one, he determined to build what might be called a city, which he began to do in the moon of Muharram of the year 541. He constructed a mosque in the centre of the place, with the tower of such height that all the city of Morocco and the surrounding country was visible therefrom. Within the circle of this town Abdelmumen arranged separate stations or barracks for the different Cabilas composing his powerful army, these being all appointed and distributed by the King of the

Almohades himself, with the most careful attention and much judgment.

When the troops had reposed themselves for some days, Abdelmumen commanded that the greater part of his force should be led to the attack of Morocco, while the remaining portion was placed in ambush at such points as he considered well suited for that purpose, his own position being selected on a convenient elevation, where he remained with his Viziers and others of his principal cavaliers to observe whatever passed, and whence they could clearly distinguish the various events of the field beneath them. The Almohade force arrived in good order before the walls of Morocco, and the troops who were defending the city coming forth to meet them, an obstinate combat ensued. The Almoravides fought with great bravery, and the Almohades resisted them for a time with infinite steadiness, but at a certain moment the latter began to give way, and commenced their retreat slowly, with a view to attract the enemy to those points where the various bands disposed in ambush were concealed. When the besieged had reached the destined place, Abdelmumen commanded that all should sally forth to the attack, and the Almoravides, unable to resist the onslaught of those who came thus fresh and in full force to assail them, turned bridle and fled towards the city with the swords of the Almohades on their necks, and the foe pursuing them did not fail to make fearful havoc among their numbers. The beaten Almoravides thus arrived at the gates of Morocco, where the carnage became more than ever fearful, by reason of the narrowness of the way, and the haste with which all strove to enter within the walls.

Rendered cautious by the unhappy result of this sortie, the defenders of Morocco no longer sallied forth so boldly to attack their enemies, and the Almohades had now little more to do than to guard the approaches, so as to prevent the ordinary supplies of provisions from entering the city. The siege was thus continued, and promised to become still further protracted. The Almohade forces were meanwhile attacking Tanja, of which they obtained possession at the close of the moon Rebie Postrera, in the year 541.

The vast population of Morocco and the animals kept

within the city had now brought all the food stored therein to an end, and everything eatable was consumed. At first the people suffered from scarcity only, but soon followed hunger: the animals having been all devoured, impure and unheard-of substances were next eaten in the place of wholesome food, until the wretched inhabitants were reduced to feeding on the corpses of the dead, while in the prisons, the miserable captives, receiving no food, were reduced to draw lots, thereby to determine which among them should be slaughtered and serve as food to the others. The mortality then became such that the streets and public squares were filled with the dead, and the living differed but little from those who had ceased to suffer. All the infancy and youth of the city fell a sacrifice to that hideous scourge of famine, the numbers destroyed amounting in the whole to no less than two hundred thousand souls.

At length the few that remained were found unable to use their arms, and could make no defence; a fearful silence reigned in the city, late so full of life and movement: nor was there one who could suggest a ground of hope wherewith to comfort another: such were the horrible calamities by which the fall of the Almoravide empire was accompanied.

Aben Iza Ben Ahmed El Razif relates that in these terrible circumstances certain Christians of Andalusia, then serving among the cavalry still alive in Morocco, held secret conference with the emissaries of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, whom they agreed to give entrance to the city by the gate of Agmat on the day which he had fixed on as that for a general scaling of the walls. The King of the Almohades promised them security for their own persons in return for that service; and preparing the scaling ladders with all else necessary for his purpose, he then distributed the needful preparations among the various Cabilas of his host. These things arranged, the troops of Abdelmumen surrounded the unhappy city on Saturday, the 18th of the moon Xawal, and at the hour of dawn they fixed their scaling ladders without finding any to oppose or give them disturbance; the soldiers then made good their entrance by those means, and poured into the place as might raging wolves into the fold of the timid sheep. The tribes of Henteta and Tinmaul rushed

in by the gate of Dukela, those of Sanhaga and Masamuda by the gate of ————,* while the Cabila of Escura and many others found entrance by the gate of Agmat.

The defence was a short and feeble one, the Alcazar Alhigar alone offering some slight resistance, seeing that therein was the King Abu Ishak Ibrahim Aben Taxfin, with the principal cavaliers and nobles of his court, as well as the chief of the Almoravide generals. The carnage in the widely-extended city was continued from early morning to the going down of the sun, and even to those miserable creatures who entreated mercy, the wretched remains of life which famine had left them were refused by their unrelenting victors; nor would the cruel prince of the Almohades grant quarter to any man, or listen to the prayers of one among the suppliants.

Having forced their way to the Alcazar Alhigar, the Almohade conquerors drew the unhappy King Ibrahim thence, with many noble Xeques and distinguished generals who were in his company, all of whom they led before the implacable Abdelmumen Ben Aly, who was awaiting them in the city which he had built on the Gebal Gelez. When he beheld the unfortunate King Ibrahim approaching, and saw that he was a mere youth in the very flower of his days, the fierce Almohade felt himself moved to compassion, and turning to his Vizier, he said, "His misfortunes are sufficient; let us leave him to deplore them in a perpetual imprisonment."

But the Viziers replied and said, "O King, do not rear a young lion which may ultimately tear us to pieces, and can scarcely fail to become dangerous."

When King Ibrahim and his Xeques were brought into the presence of Abdelmumen, the youthful sovereign cast himself at the feet of his captor, entreating from him the safety of his life, since he had in no wise offended him: but a near kinsman of Ibrahim, a Xeque of the Almoravides, called the Ameer Syr Ben Alhak, was so much displeased by those submissive words, that he spat in the face of Ibrahim, and exclaimed, "Miserable creature! dost thou imagine perchance that thou art offering thy prayers to a loving and

* The name of this gate is erased from the manuscript.—*Condé.*

compassionate father, who will regard thy moaning? Bear thy lot like a man, for this wretch is a monster that may neither be moved by tears nor satiated with blood."

These words enraged the King Abdelmumen, and in the heat of his anger he commanded that the King Ishak Abu Ibrahim, with all the Almoravide Xeques and Generals, should be put to death, without sparing the life of any one among them; and in that terrible day, as Aben Iza El Razif relates, all who yet remained of the principal persons were slaughtered accordingly.

In the city the carnage was continued during three successive days, and the same author tells us that more than seventy thousand persons departed from life in the course of those days within the walls of that most miserable place. And so finished the empire of the Almoravides, Abu Ibrahim having been king two years and some days.

Certain of the oldest writers tell us that a short time before this calamity, an Alime, called Abu Abdallah Ben Verdi, declared to his kinsmen and intimates that he had had a dream, wherein he appeared to hear the following verses:—

Deceived and wretched mortal, wake thee! wake,
Poor doomed one, from thy dream, and let thine ears
Hear the dread voice of fate inexorable.

Thus stands it written in the firm decrees
Of that graved book whose tablets are of gold,
And letters are of diamond. Thus it stands
As willed by Allah, to whose high resolves
There comes no change. The sceptre of Lamtuna
Is broken in the hand of Ibrahim,
And in his tender youth, he, napless king
Is punished for the sins of his proud sires.

To God alone the empire and the might;
His mandates are eternal, and his throne
Standeth in greatness and in majesty
For ever sure and stedfast.

The son of Sahib Sala writes to the effect that Abderahman Ben Aly made his entrance into the city of Morocco in the midst of all the carnage described, but would not remain there even to pass the night, and returned to his

pavilion, leaving the gates in the care of his Alamines, to whom he gave command that none should be permitted either to enter or depart from the place.

So passed a space of two months, after the lapse of which King Abdelmumen caused the treasures and riches of Morocco to be gathered together; he distributed the slaves, and sold the women and children, respecting one woman only, a daughter of King Aly, namely, and grand-daughter of Juzef Ben Taxfin: neither would he have done so much, as it is said, had not this lady been the wife of Heuanismar of Musafa, who had attached himself to the party of the Almohades, for which cause his wife and possessions were left to him in peace.

And now for three days the city remained shut up, and as it were a desert, after which it was purified according to the doctrine of Mehedi; but the mosques were demolished, and the king caused others to be instantly commenced in their place.

In Andalusia, the General Abu Zacaria Yahye Aben Gania had meanwhile recovered the city of Baiza, with the help of Aladfuns Ben Sancho, the Embalatur* of the Christians, and he then proceeded to lay siege to Cordova, those of the party of Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain not daring to sally forth against him. The army of the Almohades was at the same time besieging Seville, which they had invested by land and sea, being aided therein by the Rebels of Algarve, Ahmed Husein Aben Cosai and Abu Muhamad Sid-Ray, who had joined the Africans with a very powerful host. The partizans of Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain and the inhabitants of the city being equally weary of the Almoravides, also determined to favour their enemies, the Almohades, and accordingly gave them entrance into the place, which was done on Wednesday, the 12th day of Xaban, in the year 541.

Then the Almoravides of the garrison, fearing the popular vengeance as well as the fury of the conquering Almohades, fled towards Carmona, departing from Seville at the

* This Embalatur, or emperor, as he is here called, is Alfonso, King of Leon and Castile.

moment when their enemies began to enter the city, which they did at the hour of Alazar.

On the following day the Chotba was made for Abdelmumen Ben Aly in all the mosques of Seville; and at the same time the city of Malaga likewise surrendered to his power, when Alhakem Ben Hasnoun was appointed to be Alcayde thereof.

The Christian auxiliaries of Aben Gania were not idle on their part during all these movements: they took the fortress of Andujar by force of arms, as they did that of Baiza, and some others. Aben Gania had in the meantime made all things ready for besieging Cordova, which he pressed so closely that the defenders of the city were compelled to yield it to the constancy of the Almoravide general, and all they could do was to prevent the Christians, who were his auxiliaries, from entering it on the first day. On the second, however, which was the last of the moon Xaban, the Infidels made their way into the city, when they fastened their horses in the principal Aljama; nay, their hands presumed to profane the Mushaf of the Caliph Othman Ben Afan, which had been brought from Syria by the Kings of the Beni Omeyas, and was preserved therein; but that treasure God would not permit to perish in their unfaithful keeping.

The inhabitants did not fail to suffer numerous vexations at the hands of the Christians during the time that those misbelievers remained in the city; but that was not a long period, seeing that when the Infidels received intelligence of the surrender of Xeres, Sidonia, and Seville, to Abdelmumen Ben Aly, they held a council, in which it was decided that it would be advisable for them to return for that time to their own territories, there to gather forces for opposing the Almohades with all the power they could command, that resolve being also taken by the Moslemah of the party of Aben Gania and the Almoravides, as well as by the Christians who were subjects of the Embalatur.

It is true that Aladfuns Ben Sancho, the Christian Embalatur, would very gladly have retained possession of Cordova, and desired much to remain there, but Aben Gania found means to persuade the monarch to content himself

with the city of Bieza, which was nearer to his own frontiers of Medina Toledo,—may God restore that city to Islam!—and it was thus that they finally agreed: whereupon the people of the Embalatur departed from Cordova, leaving the Count Almanrik in Bieza as Wali for the Christians.

Now the populace of Cordova did not consider Aben Gania with favourable eyes, because of his alliance with the Infidel, and as the General Mohamad Ben Omar was in his company, the people declared for that leader, and desired to have him for their Ameer. Nor did Aben Gania find it good policy to oppose their wishes; but Mohamad Ben Omar, knowing the inconstancy of the popular favour, and fearing, moreover, lest Aben Gania might be offended by his acceptance, declined the offers made to him, accepting them only at the instance of Aben Gania himself, who advised him to yield to the desire of the people. Yet Mohamad Ben Omar did not remain in the city more than twelve days after his proclamation, but disappeared from the place, having first made known his determination to Aben Gania. He also left a letter written with his own hand for the magistrates and council of Cordova, in which he took leave of them, not desiring to wait until the unstable wheel of fortune should precipitate him from the summit of his perilous command.

Mohamad Ben Omar then repaired to Algarve, where he served as an adventurer in the force there acting against the rebels of the party led by Abu Mohamad Ben Samail Aben Wazir. Here his numerous merits and singular bravery could not be concealed; but being severely wounded in a sanguinary battle, he was taken prisoner and carried to the rebel Samail, who, recognising his former friend, yet forgot the ancient amity that had reigned between them, and commanded that the eyes of Mohamad Omar should be put out; that done, he cast him into a prison, where he caused the unhappy general to be confined with much rigour. It is true that when the Almohades entered Baiza they set the unhappy Omar at liberty, and he retired to Salè, where he died in the year 558.

In the east of Spain, Abu Mohamad Aben Ayadh continued to persecute all who still adhered to the party which had been led by Abdallah Ben Fetah El Thograi; but he

also held in check the Christians, who were labouring to extend their conquests in the territories of Murcia, making repeated incursions on their frontiers, and doing them incalculable injury. But one night, as the general thus sallied forth with a strong force of cavalry to protect the frontier from an expected onslaught of the Infidel and of the rebels of Beni Giomail, who were infesting the confines of Uklis, he was compelled to make his way through a narrow pass commanded by heights which were in the hands of the foe. Here his people were assailed by flights of arrows and vast masses of stone, which the enemy cast down on them from above; when the General Aben Ayadh was so grievously wounded by an arrow, that he lived only one day after receiving that wound, having passed to the mercy of Allah on Giuma, the 22nd of Rebie Primera, in the year 542.

The cavaliers by whom he was accompanied took heavy vengeance for his death,—but they had no other consolation. They carried his body, carefully embalmed and enclosed in a precious casket, to Valencia, where he was interred with much pomp, all the city making great lamentation for his loss, and the people accompanying his body to the tomb with tears of sincere regret, seeing that Muhamad Aben Ayadh was in truth an excellent governor, and one who potently protected his frontiers: he was besides most liberal to all men, and generous in the extreme: the time of his rule was two years, nine months, and twenty days

The inhabitants of Valencia then proclaimed Abu Abdallah Mohamad Ben Sad for their Wali, as Aben Ayadh had declared that they should do; and in Murcia, likewise, the people received the Naib of Aben Ayadh to be their Wali, so soon as they received intelligence of their previous ruler's death. This man, even Aly Ben Obeidallah Abul Hassan, had indeed been already entrusted with the government of the city by Muhamad Aben Ayadh himself, who had given him charge of the place at his own departure for the campaign of Uklis. Aly Ben Obeidallah therefore remained in the government until the arrival at Murcia of Mohamad Ben Sad El Gazami Aben Mardanis, which event occurred at the end of the moon Giumada Segunda. Then

the new Wali, Aly Ben Obeidallah, went forth to meet El Gazami, and said, "My lord, thou knowest that it is by thy means I have obtained this city, and for thee have I held it; thine it is, wherefore do thou enter and take possession." Thereupon Abu Abdallah Muhamad Ben Sad was proclaimed with all solemnity.*

The son-in-law of Abu Abdallah, even the Lord of Segura, Aben Hemsek, then came to visit and salute him with due deference. He was the Naib of his father-in-law in Valencia, and Abu Abdallah placed much confidence in his ability as well as integrity. The festivities, which had been very magnificent, having terminated, Abu Abdallah returned to Valencia, leaving his son-in-law, Aben Hemshek, to be Wali of Murcia; and the latter appointed the General Aben Suar to the government of Segura, which he held for Aben Hemshek. The departure of Abu Abdallah Aben Sad from Murcia took place in the moon of Regeb, in that same year of 542.

CHAP. XLI.—OF THE CONQUESTS WHICH THE CHRISTIANS CONTINUE TO MAKE IN THE TERRITORY OF THE MOSLEMAH; OF THE VICTORIES OBTAINED BY THE ALMOHADES IN AFRICA; AND OF THE WONDERFUL MACHINES THAT WERE MADE AT THIS TIME.

THE Christians were now powerfully aided by the alliances they had contracted with certain leaders of the Moslemah themselves, and were thus enabled to wrong the latter with the greater facility. Connected with the party of Aben Gania and the malcontents of Murcia, they were likewise in alliance with the partizans of the house of Aben Hud, and therefore found no difficulty in crossing the frontier, which they did with a numerous army, destroying the products of the fields and carrying off the flocks of the inhabitants, until they arrived on the confines of Almeria, marking their path by the desolation they left behind them.

There came as chief of the Christians the Embalatur

* That ceremony took place on the first day of Giumada Primera not Segunda, in the year 542.—*Condé.*

Alfonso himself, and the host led was such as to cover plain and mountain; nor did all the founts and rivers suffice them for drink, while the whole product of the land was insufficient to maintain the hordes of infantry and cavalry then following the banners of the Christian sovereign.

The Consul Ferdilando of Gallicia was also a general of the Infidels on that occasion, as were the Count Radmir, the Count Armengudi, and other rulers from Afranc, as well as from the remaining frontier lines of the Infidel. Count Raymond also came, arriving by sea with numerous ships, and the Christian bands invested the city of Almeria by land and water, so that nothing but eagles could enter therein. Then the Moslemah, who wanted provisions, after having sustained a siege of three months, and perceiving no hope of succour from any part, began to think of surrendering the place on such conditions as they could obtain, seeing that they had lost the flower of their cavalry in the frequent sallies which they had made, and there no longer remained in the city men capable of defending the place: they resigned it to the Embalatur accordingly at the close of the year 542, having received assurance of safety for their lives.

It is true that the General Aben Gania, who had caused all these misfortunes by his alliances with the Infidel, had sought to mitigate the sufferings of the people, whose lands he had devastated, and whose towns he had taken, by the benefits of various kinds which he conferred upon them. Thus he had left such officers of Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain's party as were acceptable to the inhabitants in the governments they occupied, permitting his Alcaydes to retain the fortresses which they had held for Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain, as he did in respect of Abul Casim Achib Ben Edris of Ronda, the former secretary of Abu Giafar Ben Hamdain, and who had been his Almoxarife* in Cordova, ever serving his lord with much ability, as well as loyalty and good faith.

But Abul Casim Ben Edris did not long retain the government of his native city of Ronda, since the Alcayde of Arcos, Abul Hamri, who had not gone over to the party

* Almoxarife: Lieutenant.

of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, as had those of Sidonia and Xeres, made himself master of the place by force of arms. It has been said, indeed, that he would not have been able to effect so much, had not the inhabitants been discontented with the rule of Abul Casim; but things being thus, there were malcontents who assisted the Alcayde of Arcos to enter the city, notwithstanding the admirable state of fortification in which it was held by Abul Casim, and which must have proved an insurmountable obstacle without such aid, since the site, as well as the old and invincible Alcazaba of Ronda, were considered to render it inaccessible and impregnable.

Some writers say that Abul Casim fled in good time from the city; while others affirm that Abul Hamri took him prisoner, but suffered him instantly to depart with all his family, when he took refuge in Malaga, and was entertained in the house of Abulhakem Ben Hasoun. From Malaga Aben Casim finally proceeded to Morocco, where he fixed his residence in the vicinity of Abu Abdelmelik Meruan Ben Abdelaziz, who had been Wali of Valencia; being at the same time in that of Aben Tahir of Tadmir, and of other Andalusian nobles, who dwelt there under the protection of the Vizier Abdelatia Abu Giafar Aben Atia. All these Andalusians were accustomed to assemble nightly in the house of Aben Atia, where they passed the hours in the relation of pleasing histories and the recital of elegant poetry. By the intervention of the wise Vizier Aben Atia, Abul Casim was subsequently appointed Cadi of Seville, and in that city he remained with much honour until the day of his death, which took place in the year 561.

When Abdelmumen Ben Aly, prince of the Almohades, was found to have made himself master of Morocco, a month was not suffered to elapse before there came to him envoys from the tribes of Masamuda to proffer the oath of allegiance, and all the cities of Almagreb made haste to place themselves under his protection and lordship. But in that same year of 542, Mohamad Aben Hud, son of Abdallah Aben Hud, who called himself El Hehdi, or Mehedi, rose up against Abdelmumen in Salè, and was for some time successful. Of this Mohamad we find it related that he was very poor, and gained his bread by bleaching linen on the

sea-shore near Salè: he had taken the oath of allegiance to Abdelmumen Ben Aly, and had even done that monarch service at the siege of Morocco: but subsequently rising against him, as we have said, had found means to gather a considerable force, by which, in the earlier battles of Mohamad Aben Hud with the Almohades, the latter were more than once defeated.

Having obtained possession of Temicena, Mohamad Aben Hud was there joined by the Cabilas of Sanhaga, whose cavalry hath ever been considered excellent, and the number of whose people is such as to be known only to Allah who created them. These and other tribes became the followers of Mohamad Aben Hud, taking the oath of obedience to him; and there soon remained in all that district no other cities save those of Fez and Morocco that held for Abdelmumen Ben Aly. The latter then sent his Xeque, Abu Hafas Omar Ben Yahye of Hinteta, against these rebels, with a carefully-chosen body of his Almohades, accompanied by many dexterous marksmen and certain Christian cavaliers who were at that time in his service, all of whom departed from Morocco on the first day of the moon Dylcada, in the year 542.

Abdelmumen himself subsequently followed with the rearguard of his force, and the army directed its march upon Tensifel in the kingdom of Suz, when they met that of the rebels, which had taken possession of Tensitena. Here a fierce and sanguinary battle was fought between the opposing hosts, and in the hottest of the struggle the two generals met in person, when they encountered each other bravely, both fighting with much ability and valour. But Muhamad Aben Hud died in that contest, having been pierced by a cruel thrust of a lance from the hand of the Xeque, Abu Hafas Seif Ala, and on his death the field was resigned by his followers, who were then defeated with a fearful slaughter.

Now it had chanced that at this time the envoys of Seville had arrived at Morocco, having been sent to offer the oath of allegiance to King Abdelmumen Ben Aly in the name of that city. But as the sovereign was occupied with his war against the rebel Cabilas, they were compelled to wait a year and a half in Morocco before they could see his

face: at the end of that time, Abdelmumen, having subdued the malcontents, returned to his court.

When the king had obtained the mastery over the tribes of Sanhaga, he turned his arms against the Cabilas of Velad Dukela, who had more than twenty thousand horse, and upwards of two hundred thousand foot-soldiers; but they were badly armed, and Abdelmumen Ben Aly therefore subdued them easily, compelling them to retire to the sea-shore, and confining them to the salt-water marshes which extend along the coast. Here, then, he prepared to give these tribes decisive battle.

Now those of Dukela had on this occasion placed all the flower of their force in the vanguard, expecting that Abdelmumen Ben Aly would attack them in front with his cavalry and cross-bowmen: but the king made use of stratagem, as was much his wont. Concealing his cavalry and the greater part of his strength for an attack on the flanks of his opponent, he did but feign the attack in front, for which the people of Dukela were prepared, and then threw himself with all his force on the flanks: that unlooked-for movement compelling the tribes of Dukela to change their order of battle, threw their army into some confusion, and Abdelmumen Ben Aly then broke and defeated them with great slaughter. It is true that they still maintained themselves in part on a slight elevation which they had found means to occupy, but they were ultimately driven thence, and the king's troops pursuing them even to the sea, drove their fugitive bands amidst the waves, and vast numbers there died in the waters, while others fell beneath the lances of the foe. The women of the defeated tribes were then taken captive, and at the same time the survivors of those Cabilas lost all their camels and flocks. The number of children, maidens, and women, was such that one of these captives might then be bought, as rumour declared, for a Rubia, or other coin of equally trifling value.*

This undertaking accomplished, Abdelmumen Ben Aly then returned to Morocco, entering that city on the Idal Adhahea, or Feast of the Victims. The ambassadors sent

* Ahmed Ben Yahye Ben Omeira says that a girl was sold for an Adirham, and a boy for half that sum.—*Condé.*

by the cities of Andalusia were then presented to him, and first came those of Seville, who had arrived earlier than the rest in Morocco, and were the most noble of all who had repaired thither on that occasion: these were the Cadi Abu Bekar Aben Alarabi Aben Muhafin, the Chatib or secretary Abu Bekar Aben Murber, the Chatib Abu Bekar Ben Algid, Abul Hassan of Tahra, and Abul Hassan Aben Sahib Salat, the renowned historiographer, with Abu Bekar Ben Xegir of Beja, Alhazri, Abu Seiud, Aben Taher, and others of the most distinguished inhabitants of Seville. The Cadi Aben Alarabi spoke in the name of all, and his discourse was so elegant, that the king was infinitely charmed with the grace and eloquence thereof, insomuch that he accorded to the Cadi permission to approach his person whenever he might desire to do so, and conversed with him several times. Among other things, Abdelmumen asked Aben Alarabi various questions respecting El Mehedi; as, for example, whether he had known that personage when a student at Bagdad, and whether he had studied with him in the school of the Imaum Algazali.

To this the Cadi replied that he had not met El Mehedi, but had frequently heard him mentioned by the Imaum Algazali himself, who commended him highly, and frequently declared that El Mehedi would infallibly raise himself to the empire of the west. Abdelmumen furthermore enquired whether Aben Alarabi had heard that El Mehedi had received the Book of the Proverbs of Algefer from his master, the Imaum Algazali, discoursing with him besides of many other matters relating to learning and the sciences. The king replied, therefore, in the most favourable manner to the embassy of the Sevillians, granting them numerous privileges for their city. King Abdelmumen Ben Aly finally dismissed the various ambassadors, who prepared to return to Andalusia: but at that time the Cadi Aben Alarabi fell sick, and his malady increased so grievously that he died before he could be transported from Africa, when his remains were interred with much honour in the Cyebana or Mikabira of Fez. The rest of the ambassadors returned to Andalusia, in the moon of Giumada Segunda, and the year 543.

King Abdelmumen Ben Aly now determined to restore the city of Morocco, and to build new mosques, schools, and

other edifices of similar importance. This he proposed to do with the treasures of King Aly, the son of Juzef, and with the riches of Lamtuna, which were of inestimable value; nay, there is not a tongue but must prove incapable of describing them, or enumerating their amount. He accordingly caused a large mosque to be constructed in the house or palace called Dakalhijar; and this was a more magnificent one than that which had been formerly founded in the lower part of the city by King Aly Ben Juzef.

The mosque being in course of construction, Abdelmumen Ben Aly caused passages or galleries of extraordinary contrivance and marvellous artifice to be made therein; and these, which were all concealed, being connected with his palace, supplied him with a secret way by which he could enter the mosque without being seen. He likewise presented to the mosque an Almimbar, or pulpit, of admirable workmanship, the material thereof being of an aromatic wood called lit, or of sandal wood, white, pale-yellow coloured, or red: all the bands, bars, cleats, clamps, nails, screws, and fastenings of whatever kind, were of gold or silver, while the most exquisite beauty of execution was perceptible in every part of that graceful and elegant work.

At the same time, Abdelmumen Ben Aly caused a Maksura or movable cabinet, platform, or apartment, to be constructed, which could be moved from one part to another upon wheels, although the space within it was so great as to be capable of containing one thousand persons. This station or apartment had six divisions, wings, or arms, which were extended by means of hinges peculiarly formed; and these, as well as the wheels, were so disposed and contrived that they produced no sound when put in movement, but acted in profound silence, yet with the most complete certainty; every piece of the whole was so carefully prepared, and all had been calculated with so much nicety according to the rules of geometry, that each of the machines (those acting on the Maksura and Almimbar, namely) moved simultaneously at the instant when the curtains of either door by which the king might be pleased to enter as he passed into the mosque, were raised as he proceeded to make the Azala on the Giuma of every week: the moment the curtain was lifted, that is to say, the

Maksura and Almimbar began to move forward, each on its own side, and both advancing on their wheels with infinite quietude and dignity. The arms or divisions alike extended themselves without any discord or failure in the exactitude of the movements, gradually placing themselves in perfect silence within convenient positions of the principal chapel.

To the Almimbar there was furthermore added machinery of such a kind that as the Chatib or preacher ascended the steps of the same, the door gradually opened, and when he had entered, it closed in like manner, softly and without any cause of that effect being seen or heard,—such was the perfect action which had been given to those admirable machines. The king, with his guards and household, could also ascend to his Maksura, and return with the same facility.

These wonderful works were performed by the renowned artificer Alhaus Yahix, of Malaga, the same who constructed the fortress of Gebal Tarik, also by order of Abdelmumen Ben Aly. The extraordinary art exhibited in these machines was celebrated in elegant verses by the Chatib Abu Bekir Ben Murber of Fehra. The poem, which is a long one, contains a passage to the following effect:—

Happy art thou, if, to the royal house
Of him whose hand, extended o'er the nations,
Protects and shelters all, thy lord shall call thee.
Happy if to those walls thou mayst approach
Where dwells our sovereign; he, whose liberal heart
Embracing all, seeks most the wise and learned,
The cunning workman, as the sage sublime
Of varied lore; duly rewarding each.

There, secret most prodigious! shalt thou find
Machines that reason, or that move as beings
Endowed with sense and will. Portals are there
Of fair proportion, opening, as the step
Of their known lord approaches them. They haste
To give him entrance, nor refuse the same
To such as he hath graced to follow him—
His nobles and viziers. More shalt thou see—
Machines that move to meet him as he nears them
Attentive to his wish, and stealing forth
Silently to receive their potent lord.
Nay, when he turns to leave them, they retire,
Anticipating still the wish he forms.

Calm and majestic, as their glorious master
So do they seem. Of fair and varied form
Is every part. Noble and graceful movements
Distinguish all; their beauty regular
And lovely as the moon, what time she paces
Soft through the star-strewn vaults of the fair heaven.

Without the city, King Abdelmumen Ben Aly caused a pleasant garden to be planted; the extent thereof was three miles in either direction, the ground forming a square, and in it were excellent fruits, both sweet and acid, of every kind known, so that nothing remained to be desired therein. For his garden Abdelmumen caused water to be conducted from Agmat, and with that water he constructed several fine fountains. Aben Iza Ben Ahmed Ben Muza, who was at Morocco in the year 543, declares that the produce of the olives in that garden were then farmed at a rent of thirty thousand Almumini doubloons, and that this sum was considered to be a moderate one when taken in relation with the value of those fruits.

In that same year of 543 the King of Sicily took possession of the city of Mehedra with those of Sifakis, Bona, and others, to the great loss of the Moslemah.

About this time Abdelmumen Ben Aly directed his march on Sigilmesa, which surrendered by capitulation, having received promise of security for the lives of the inhabitants. The king then returned to Morocco, but did not remain there many days, having determined on a campaign against the people of Beni Guete, with whom he had many obstinate conflicts: he finally defeated their forces, nor would Abdelmumen consent to remove his sword from above their heads until he had totally destroyed them.

Affairs were in that state when the inhabitants of Cebta rose against the Almohades, and expelled them from their city. This they did after having accepted Abdelmumen Ben Aly as their lord, proclaimed him in their streets, and received numerous benefits at his hands, seeing that the king had repaired their walls, restored their mosques, and conferred other favours upon them. It was in pursuance of the counsels of their Cadi Ayadh Ben Muza that the people of Cebta rose in rebellion, and having done so they fell suddenly on the Almohades, slaying all on whom they

could lay hands; they suffered none to escape save only those who had the good fortune to receive timely warning, and so took flight. The principal men of the Almohades the rebels are even accused of having burnt alive.

The Cadi Ayadh Muza then embarked in the port, and passed over into Spain to require succours from the General Abu Zacaria Aben Gania, who gave him a body of troops, commanded by El Darawi, who was a very brave and able captain.

With these auxiliaries Ayadh Muza then returned to Cebta; and the Andalusians had no sooner entered the city than its inhabitants proclaimed Abu Zacaria Aben Gania their Wali. The Andalusian general was now joined by Aben Gueta, and together they went forth against the forces of the king, Abdelmumen Aben Aly. The two armies having joined battle, Abdelmumen defeated and routed the rebels most effectually, slaying the greater part of them, and taking very many prisoners. El Darawi escaped with life, and then wrote letters to Abdelmumen Ben Aly requesting to be admitted among the number of his subjects; whereupon the king granted what he desired, and El Darawi took the oath of allegiance, acknowledging Abdelmumen Ben Aly as his lord.

When the people of Cebta heard of this, they considered themselves to be but lost men, and sent messengers to the king declaring that they had cast themselves trembling at his feet, and entreating forgiveness. Abdelmumen received their submission with much satisfaction, and did in fact consent to forgive them, as well as their Cadi Ayadh Muza, but he commanded that the walls of their city should be demolished.

At the same period the defences of Mekinesa were likewise razed to the ground by order of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, who had held that place in a sort of siege for nearly seven years; but having entered it by force of arms on Wednesday, the third day of the Moon Giumada Primera, in the year 543, he put the greater part of the inhabitants to the sword, deprived those whose lives he spared of one-fifth of all they possessed, and after he had first permitted his troops to subject the city to plunder and sack, he caused it to be utterly destroyed.

CHAP. XLII.—The Almohades take Cordova and other cities of Andalusia.

In this year the Almohades laid siege to Cordova, which was then held by Aben Gania, who defended the place with admirable valour. Every day the besieged made sorties, which ended in the most obstinate conflicts, and many were the surprises which they also prepared for their enemy. But after a sanguinary struggle the General Aben Gania became convinced that the place could not be much longer maintained; he therefore departed secretly on a certain day when his people had had a skirmish with the besiegers, and repaired to Granada, leaving his Wali Yahye Ben Aly Ben Aasa in Cordova, which that officer did not defend long after his lord had left it; on the contrary, he made an agreement with the Almohades, to whom he surrendered the place with the sole condition of safety for the lives of the Almoravides. The latter then evacuated the city, taking refuge for the most part in Cormona; but a certain portion of their number proceeded to Granada, with their Wali Yahye Ben Aly Ben Aasa.

The general of the Almohades then took possession of Cordova, which he entered in the name of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, and the Chotba was made for that monarch in the Great Aljame, when the latter had been purified for the purpose. The previous Mushaf of Othman Ben Afan was then also restored, and put in order to be presented to the King, Abdelmumen Ben Aly.

And now the Almoravide general, Aben Gania, perceiving well that his own forces would not suffice effectually to encounter those of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, King of the Almohades, entreated the aid of his former ally and friend, the Embelatur, even Alfonso, King of Toledo, when the latter sent him a body of cavalry, commanded by the Count of Almanrik. With that reinforcement to the people of his own territories Aben Gania then went forth to seek the Almohades, but perceiving that his General Yahye Ben Aly discouraged the hearts of his troops by insisting on the great bravery and dexterity in the use of their arms, which were exhibited by the Almohade cavaliers, Aben Gania was

no longer able to endure his presence; wherefore he one day drew his scimitar and struck off the head of Yahye Ben Aly at one blow, exclaiming as he did so, "This ought I to have done before I confided to thy craven hand the defence of Cordova."

Arrived in the district of Jaen, Abu Zacaria Aben Gania had various conflicts with the Almohades, whom he opposed with varying fortunes, but after a time, the forces of Abdelmumen Ben Aly having obtained possession of Carmona, united all their bands, and ventured to advance upon the Vega of Granada: entering this district, therefore, they destroyed the crops, cut up the cultivated grounds, and carried devastation whithersoever they appeared.

Abu Zacaria Aben Gania then determined to hazard a general battle, and the combat was a very fierce one; but Aben Gania himself was so grievously wounded by the many thrusts of the Almohade lances, which had pierced through his armour, that he died of those injuries immediately after; on Friday namely, the 21st day* of the Moon Xuban in the year 543. He was interred at Cazbe Baz in the Makbira of Badis Ben Habus, King of Granada. To the Almoravides the death of Abu Zacaria Aben Gania was the source of much sorrow, seeing that in him ended that series of Almoravide generals who have left so splendid a trace in story, with the memory of so many glorious and heroic deeds. It was by this illustrious general that the battle of Fraga was won from the Christians, and wherein the bravest of the infidel kings, Alfonso, monarch of two kingdoms, was slain: it is true that his fame was somewhat obscured by an alliance with the Christians, from which he had sought aid during that war of Anfitna† which we are now describing.

In the following year of 544, the Almohades occupied many cities of Andalusia, and arrived before Medina Jaen, which they besieged; but the city surrendered on certain conditions, and the Almohades having made good their entrance, the Chotba for King Abdelmumen Ben Aly was made in the mosques thereof.

* Or as Alabar says, on Thursday, the 10th of that month.—*Condé.*
† Alfitna: proof, or trial.

In Africa also the same powerful monarch took possession, with his Almoade troops, of much new territory, obtaining possession of the city of Meliana among others. In the year 544 it was that a general known as Aben Tamarkid raised his hand against Abdelmumen Ben Aly in Temezena; and this circumstance gave the king much anxiety, because Tamarkid had joined himself to the rebel Aben Gueta, who had been proclaimed their lord by many of the Cabilas of Barbary. But Abdelmumen received timely intelligence of all that took place, and going forth against these insurgents, he compelled them to a pitched battle, power against power, wherein Adelmumen obtained the advantage, although not without an obstinate and sanguinary struggle. The rebel leader died fighting in the combat, and his head was sent to Morocco, together with the news of that signal victory.

At the commencement of the year 545, the King Alfonso of Toledo set forth in aid of the Almoravides who had been led by Abu Zacaria Aben Gania; he was acquainted with that general's death, but now declared himself the protector of all who held to his party. Continuing his march until he reached Cordova, the Christian king then laid siege to that city and its Almohade defenders; his skirmishing parties meanwhile destroying the fields, carrying off the flocks, and taking the lives of the unhappy people who dwelt in that part of Andalusia.

King Abdelmumen Ben Aly was equally active on his part, but was employing his arms in Africa, and had conducted his forces against Medina Salè, whither he caused pure water to be conducted from Rabatal Fetah. While thus occupied, Abdelmumen Ben Aly received notice of the arrival in Morocco of an embassy from Andalusia, which consisted of no less than five hundred cavaliers of the highest distinction and importance, everyone of them being a Xeque, Alcayde, Alfaki, Alchatib, or other eminent person. They were received by the Viziers of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, even Abu Ibrahim and Abu Hafas, who did them all honour, and entertained them with splendid hospitality. These distinguished guests were subsequently presented to Abdelmumen himself, saluting him on his return to his court; but three days after they were again presented with great

solemnity, and on that occasion, which was the first day of the Moon Muharram in the year 546, the learned Chatib and Alfaki, Abu Giaffar Ben Atia, discoursed with Abdelmumen Ben Aly in relation to the affairs of Spain, supporting all that the Spanish ambassadors had previously affirmed in a discourse which they had made to the king. This erudite person, who was the secretary of King Abdelmumen Ben Aly, had indeed but just returned from Andalusia, whither he had been sent by his sovereign to take order for the arrangement of affairs in Cordova, and for the government of that city, then recently subjected to the Almohade power. He had also been commissioned to instal the Cadi of the Grand Aljama, even Abul Casim Ben Alhaug, in his charge; and thus informed by personal observation, he was in good condition for describing to his lord the state of things in Cordova and in Andalusia generally. He made known, therefore, to Abdelmumen Ben Aly that the capital of Spain, and the central city of the Moslemah dwelling in that country, was at that time subjected to attack and besieged by the tyrant Alfonso—whom may Allah confound! and told how the fields of its Comarcas were destroyed by the barbarous Infidel, the villages of the district being burnt, and the whole land devastated by the same evil hands. "If thou, O King," he added, "dost permit Cordova to be taken, the hearts of the Moslemah, who have defended it with so much steadiness and bravery, cannot but sink and be discouraged; but all the Faithful hope that thou wilt hasten to their rescue, and expel the enemy of Islam from their borders. To thee all direct their eyes as towards a mountain of refuge, and in thee is the trust of all for the security and assured protection of their lives: do not thou, then, O King of the Faithful, disappoint the expectations that these men have founded on thy known desire for the welfare of Islam."

Something to the same effect was urged by Abu Bekir Alged, in a brief and elegant address, which Abdelmumen Ben Aly heard with pleasure and attention, replying to both the speakers with many judicious observations, and declaring his intention of acting promptly in defence of those for whom those eloquent orators sought his aid. He

then dismissed them, exhorting each of the ambassadors to be zealous in the service of his country; and they all returned thither accordingly without delay.

In the commencement of the year 546, Abdelmumen Ben Aly set his troops in motion for the purpose of repressing certain indications of discontent which had become perceptible in the eastern parts of Africa. He appointed Abu Hafas Ben Yahye to be governor of Morocco during his absence, and departed for Medina Salè, where he remained two months, as if desirous of preparing for his passage into Spain. From Salè, Abdelmumen repaired to Cebta, where he exhibited the same manifestations of a purpose to pass the strait. He there dismissed the Andalusian ambassadors, those of Seville and Cordova namely, who then embarked for their own country,—to which they returned highly satisfied, and bearing with them the brightest hopes.

When King Abdelmumen Ben Aly had assembled the number of troops that he required in the Alcazar Abdelkerim, he divided them into such bodies as he thought suitable for his purpose, and gave orders as to what each division should do: he then continued his march to Guadi Mulua. From the last-named place the king proceeded to Telencem, but in that city he did not remain more than a single day, and while there commanded that a proclamation to the following effect should be made throughout the host: —"Hear ye, O my people, and attend to my words; whichever of you shall speak one syllable or utter a word whereby the way we take may be made known, shall lose his head."

That order announced, Abdelmumen proceeded with all the speed he could make towards Bugia, which place he reached by forced marches, and with so much secrecy, that the rebel Lord of Bugia, on whose territories he had thus advanced, even Asisbila Yahye Ben Anasir Ben Hamid, who was descended from the Beni Hamides or Hamudes of Santiaga, remained in ignorance of his approach until the troops had reached Algezair, of which city Abdelmumen Ben Aly took possession, by treaty with its Alcade or Amil. The inhabitants received promise of security for their lives, and were received into the protection of King Abdelmumen; but the Alcayde, distrusting the intentions of the king as regarded

himself, departed secretly on the day of Abdelmumen's entry. He had scarcely got clear of the city, when he met his master, the Lord of Bugia, to whom he related all that had taken place, and how the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly had become possessor of Algezair and Medina. Amazed at this intelligence, which was altogether unexpected, Asisbila Yahye Ben Anasir Ben Hamud was for some time unable to believe what he heard; but when assured of the truth, his courage sank, and he gave himself up for lost.

Abdelmumen Ben Aly on his part lost no time, but marching on Bugia, laid siege to that city, which threw open its gates on the second day, the citizens going forth to receive their new Lord, and the Naib who governed the place for the King of Bugia, and who was called Abu Abdallah Ben Simon, known also as Abu Hamdoun, offered him the sovereignty of the same, while Asisbila Ben Anasir, its king, had no other resource than flight; wherefore, leaving his possessions to his powerful enemy, he sought refuge in Cosantina.* But Abdelmumen at once despatched a body of troops in pursuit, commanding the general of that force to press the deposed monarch so closely as to render it impossible for him to assemble any considerable number of his people; and this was done effectually, insomuch that Asisbila Yahye Ben Anasir, placed in a condition wherein he could no longer defend himself, was compelled to make terms with the conqueror, from whom he received assurances of security for himself and all his family; whereupon the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly took possession of his whole territory.†

The Almohade sovereign then retired to his court of Morocco, taking the King of Bugia, Asisbila Ben Anasir Aben Hamid, in his company. He there presented the deposed monarch with a magnificent house and large possessions, which enabled him to live in the city of Morocco with all honour and in a manner suited to the nobility of his birth, being ever esteemed very highly, as it is said, by the King of the Almohades, Abdelmumen Ben Aly.

* Abdel Halim tells us that Asisbila fled by sea to Medina Gouna, and from Gouna to Medina Castela.—*Condé.*

† The author referred to in the preceding note describes Abdelmumen as entering Bezaya in the moon of Dylcada, 547.—*Idem.*

But Asisbila Ben Anasir Aben Hamid subsequently lost his judgment, and at such moments as he could take recreation, the one in which he most delighted was the chase, all kinds of wild animals being in turn the objects of his search. He took lions, tigers, and other creatures of equal fierceness, in nets of iron; and a portion of the fruits of that chase was constantly presented by him to Abdelmumen, who was much pleased with his gifts, which he received with all due courtesy, conferring many favours on Asisbila Ben Hamid in return.

One day Ben Hamid brought to the king a young lion which he had newly taken, and led chained to the palace: he conducted the animal into the hall where Abdelmumen Ben Aly was then on his seat of judgment. Beholding the lion approach, Abdelmumen Ben Aly commanded that his chain should be taken off, and Aben Hamid set the animal free accordingly, to the great terror of all who were present; but the lion was no sooner at liberty than he walked directly towards the king, and passing through the files of the guards, marched forward with his eyes flaming as do lighted torches: he arrived at the throne of Abdelmumen Ben Aly without injuring any one, when he lay down at the king's feet with extraordinary gentleness, remaining there in perfect quietude. On that same day there was presented to Abdelmumen a bird which spoke Arabic and the language of Barbary, pronouncing clearly various words in both those tongues, and saluting the sovereign very intelligibly. This gave occasion to Abu Aly of Xeres for the composition of certain verses, wherein he alludes to the fact that wild beasts and birds subjected themselves to king Abdelmumen Ben Aly, proffering him their obedience and acknowledging his sovereignty.

CHAP. XLIII.—OF THE SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES FOUNDED BY ABDELMUMEN. HE CAUSES THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO BE TAKEN TO HIS SON, CID MOHAMAD, WHOM HE DECLARES HIS SUCCESSOR. OF THE WARS IN AFRICA AND SPAIN.

WHEN the affairs of Africa had been placed in good order, the king appointed his Xeque, Abu Mohamad Ben Abi

Afs, to be his Wali in that country. He then turned his attention to the embellishment of his city of Morocco, which he enriched by the establishment of Aljamas and Colleges. He also founded a school for the instruction of youth, not in the sciences only, but in the use of arms likewise, and in such accomplishments as befit the soldier: for he would not only have learned Cadies, able Governors of provinces, and competent Alcaydes of cities, but desired, furthermore, to see generals and good warriors issuing from his schools. Into these colleges and schools the king gathered boys from the noblest families of Masamuda and other tribes of his dominions, their number amounting to three thousand, and their age being so exactly equal that they seemed all to have been brought into the world on one and the same day. These children were called Hafites, and sometimes Talbes, because they studied and committed to memory the Muetta or precepts of El Mehedi, and were also instructed from another book called the *Cazema Yutlabu*, which is one of the most valuable works that can be desired for such a purpose: many other books were also used for the instruction of those youths.

These Hafites the king was wont to assemble in his Alcazar on the Giumas or Fridays, which was the day when he went to the Azala; and he would then command them to repeat in his presence what they had learned during the week, —thus encouraging those youths to study, to the end that they might become learned men, capable of prompt resolution and able to offer discreet counsels. On another day of the week Abdelmumen would have them perform in his presence their exercises in the management of their horses and the use of arms, causing them to cast the javelin, to show their speed in races, and to exhibit other accomplishments suited to their knightly condition: a third day was devoted to the display of their dexterity in the use of the cross-bow, the casting of darts, shooting with arrows, and using other missile weapons: on another day of the week, again, the king would have these Hafites exercised in swimming, and for that purpose he had caused a great pond, which might well be called a lake, to be dug in his garden; it was three hundred paces long, and of equal breadth, having the form of a square, and on this piece of water were vessels of

various forms and character,—as, for example, miniature frigates and others, some of which were invented by Abdelmumen Ben Aly himself, and were of a singular construction never before seen. On these he would have the Hafites embark, when the opposing parties attacked each other, approaching or retreating with all speed, and showing much dexterity in the management of their ships.

In rowing, steering, and all the various manœuvres required for the government of vessels on sea, the king would also have the Hafites well-informed, compelling all to exercise themselves continually in whatever he considered necessary for their accomplishment in war, alike on land and sea. In this manner every day of the week was employed, each having its appointed occupation, and the young men being animated to their tasks by the honourable rewards which king Abdelmumen Ben Aly bestowed on such as were victors in the various fights, or had otherwise distinguished themselves in their exercises and duties. And as the king had gifts and praises for ability, so had he the most effectual admonitions for those who needed such, by which means he awakened a powerful spirit of emulation in those youths, who were all eager to distinguish themselves and to merit the approbation of their king. The expenses for all things required by the various studies were supplied by Abdelmumen Ben Aly himself, and by him it was that the arms and horses of the young men were also provided.

Among these Hafites were thirteen sons of the king, who all proved to be very dexterous in the use of their weapons; they were particularly apt in all the exercises, and were, moreover, distinguished for other very laudable qualities. Now it was the declared intention of King Abdelmumen Ben Aly to confer on the Hafites whom he thus carefully instructed, the governments which had been held by their fathers respectively, placing men of age and experience with such of them as were still young, to the end that these sages might give them the aid of their counsels and wisdom. The Xeques and nobles suggested to him that his own sons ought to be appointed to the principal among his governments; but for some time Abdelmumen did not listen to their entreaties; yet as they persisted and did not cease their

instances to that effect, he granted their request at a subsequent period.

In the already mentioned year of 546, the general Abu Hafaz passed into Spain by order of King Abdelmumen Ben Aly, having a large army of Almohade Moslemah in his command, and with that Xeque went Cid Abu Said, son of the Ameer Ammuminin Abdelmumen Aly, with intent that he should take part in the Algazua, or holy war, against the Christians. The principal charge given by the king to his general Abu Hafas and to Cid Abu Said, his son, was that of recovering the city of Almeria from the hands of the Infidel; and to this end they were provided with a numerous fleet of ships, that the Moslemah force might be prepared to attack the Christians by sea as well as by land. The two commanders advanced on Almeria accordingly, besieging the place with much ardour, and soon bringing it to great straights, seeing that they omitted no means of assault; nor was there any engine of war which they did not bring against it.

Among other things, Cid Abu Said commanded that a wall of earth should be constructed around the city; and this was done so effectually that neither entrance to, nor issue from Almeria, was possible to any but the eagles.

Now the Christians had early demanded succours from their king Alfonso; nor did that sovereign delay the despatch of the needful reinforcements; and with these came Abdallah Ben Ayadh Aben Mardanis, who likewise brought a powerful force of foot and horse, in the hope of relieving the town. But they could not compel the Almohades to raise the siege, neither could they approach the city, or make any impression on the wall raised by Cid Abu Said.

Then the Christians constructed a wall on their part, by which that of the Almohade prince was in its turn enclosed and surrounded as it had previously encircled the walls of the city: this last bulwark was an exceedingly strong and high one. And now there were daily skirmishes, wherein the Moslemah troops laboured to destroy what was done in the construction of the circumvallation, and to impede the continuance of the works. Wonders of valour were then performed by the brave warriors of both sides,

until the Christians, despairing of their ability to overcome the persistence of Cid Abu Said, broke up their camp, as did also Abdallah Ben Ayadh Aben Mardanis, with the Christian force sent by King Alfonso, when those two armies last mentioned separated; nor did they ever again unite their forces.

From Almeria the Christian generals proceeded to besiege the cities of Ubeda and Baeza, then occupied by Almohade troops, by whom the Christians previously holding them had been expelled. Now Ubeda and Baeza had been sacked by the Infidel in the time of Aben Gania, and in that campaign wherein King Alfonso had repaired to Aben Gania's assistance. At that period the Christian king had ravaged and devastated Andalusia during three entire months, and had occupied those two cities for some time, but finally, exhausted and worn out by repeated skirmishes, and by the perpetual surprises given them by the Moslemah, his troops had retired, defeated and discouraged, to their own frontiers.

Cid Abu Said on his part continued the siege of Almeria; but the strength of the city caused the operations to be greatly prolonged, as we shall see.

In Africa King Abdelmumen was again compelled to despatch a force, for the purpose of restraining certain rebellious demonstrations which were made in the territory of Begaya and in Medina Kintala. These troubles were found, nevertheless, to be of but slight importance, and when the rebels had been brought into subjection, the king appointed one of the Almohade Talbes to act as the Cadi of the district, and govern those Comarcas.

In the year 548, Abdelmumen Ben Aly caused Isaltin Coraib Almehedi to be pursued and taken prisoner, when he was brought from Cebta to Morocco in chains, and the king commanded that he should be impaled before the gate of the last-mentioned city. After having seen that sentence executed, Abdelmumen determined to repair to Tinmaul, there to visit the tomb of the Imaum El Mehedi. He placed all things in good order within the city of Morocco, and that done, he set forth with a great train and escort of cavalry. Arrived at Tinmaul, he distributed large alms to the poor, and commanded that a splendid mosque should be

erected in the city. Remaining to see the commencement of the work, he departed so soon as the building had been commenced, and repaired to Salè, where he made his abode during the rest of the year 548.

At the commencement of the year 549, Abdelmumen Ben Aly disposed all things for the declaration of his successor to the empire of the Almohades, and for the ceremony of taking the oath of allegiance, which he then determined to solemnize. With these intentions he sent letters to all the provinces, assembling the Xeques thereof, and when the nobles were all in presence, he declared his son, Cid Muhamad, to be the successor he had chosen, with the command that the prince's name should thenceforth be mentioned in the Chotba, immediately after his own. It was in this assembly of his Almohade Xeques that Abdelmumen, yielding to their suggestions, made a distribution of the governments and Amelias of his empire among his sons, at the same time appointing the principal of those Xeques to be the counsellors and associates in authority of the princes thus distinguished. To Cid Abu Hafal, the King gave the government of Telencen and its Comarcas, appointing Abu Muhamad Abdelhac Waldin to be his associate or counsellor; he furthermore named the Alfakir Abul Hassan, with Abdelmelic Ben Ayas, to be the secretaries of the young governor. The government of Cebta and Tangiers he gave to his son Cid Abu Said, the associates of that prince being Abu Muhamad Abdalla Ben Suleiman and Abu Bekir Ben Genis of Beja.

To his son Cid Abu Muhamad Abdallah he gave the government of Begaya, appointing Abu Said to be his associate, and giving the latter a deputy or lieutenant in the person of Abu Alhassan. The government of Seville and Talf, with their Comarcas, he bestowed on his son Cid Abu Jakub Juzef, naming the Xeque Abu Zaide Ben Nagib to the Waliazgo of Cordova, with all its Amelias or jurisdictions. On his son Cid Abu Hassan the King conferred the government of Fez, appointing the Xeque Abu Jakub Juzef Ben Suleiman to be his associate, and giving him Abul Abbas Ben Muda for his secretary: all these Xeques were enjoined to assist the young men by the prudence of their counsels, to the end that those princes might become confirmed in the

principles and knowledge required to constitute good and able governors.

After this distribution of the government among the sons of Abdelmumen Ben Aly, and his declaration of Cid Muhamad to be his successor, with the justice inflicted on Isaltin of Coraib, the Almehedi, there followed another event, which we now proceed to relate. The brothers of the unhappy Isaltin, Abdelaziz and Iza, unwarned by the fearful example which the king had made of their relative, incited the people of Medina Fez to rise against his authority, and having assembled a strong force, they marched against Morocco itself, taking the road of Almaadin. The king was then on the point of departure from Medina Salè, and meeting a portion of those troops as they advanced from Fez, he was amazed at the unexpected intelligence of the two brothers having already entered Morocco by surprise.

Now the king had left the Vizier Abu Giaffar Ben Atia to be his Wali in Morocco during the period of his own absence; but Abu Giaffar had made no movement against Abdelaziz and Iza, who put Abu Hafaz Ben Yaferagez, the governor of the city, to death.

But now came Abdelmumen Ben Aly himself to the relief of the place, which he entered so secretly that none were aware of his coming, and the king acted with so much caution that he succeeded in getting into his hands the two unfortunate men, Abdelaziz and Iza, whom he instantly caused to be impaled, as had been done in the case of their brother Isaltin.

In that same year the Almohades entered Leila, which they took by storm, after a long and difficult siege. The command of the troops had on this occasion been confided by Abdelmumen Ben Aly to his general Abu Zacaria Ben Yamoun, who gave many proofs of bravery and aptitude in the practice of war during the course of the siege, which was a somewhat protracted one; but Zacaria Ben Yamoun finally succeeded in carrying the place by assault.

Now the inhabitants of Leila had retired to that one of their suburbs which was the most remote from the point at which the besiegers had forced an entrance; but the infuriated soldiery pursued the fugitives thither, putting

all whom they encountered to the sword, without sparing the life of any, insomuch that there perished at the storming of Leila many illustrious persons, men of learning and others, the loss of whom is greatly to be deplored. Among these was the Faki Abu Hakem Ben Batal, the celebrated historian and traditionary, with the Faki Saleh Alfadil Abu Omar Ben Alhad: eight thousand persons were put to death in one suburb only, and in the environs of the city no less than four thousand men were slain by the soldiery. They afterwards put up all the maidens and children to sale, with the property of all kinds. The jewels and other valuables, nay, even the vestments of the people, being all thus disposed of, the usual disposition of the spoil took place beneath the banners of the army as would have been done had that been a market of war held by the orders of the king.

When Abdelmumen Ben Aly was made acquainted with these things he was greatly displeased; so much was he enraged against the general Abu Zacaria Ben Yamoun, that he commanded him to be brought to Morocco in chains, which was done, and Abu Zacaria thus entered the capital at the close of Ramazan, and on the Easter of Alfitra. He was then cast into a dungeon, the king reproving him severely for his cruelty and the unbridled license he had permitted, nor was he forgiven until after he had suffered a long imprisonment. Yet for all this severity in the punishment of the culpable commander, Abdelmumen Ben Aly did not restore any part of their possessions to such of the unhappy dwellers in Leila as had escaped with their lives, and who, though delivered from death, had to endure the loss of all their property.

In the commencement of the year 550 the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly commanded that the mosques of all the provinces should be repaired, and he furthermore gave orders—being moved thereto by his innate love of learning and taste for literature—that the reading of Hadices should be immediately permitted and encouraged, as well as the writing and teaching of the same. He forbade the burning of books relating to deeds of knightly prowess, and gave permission for the writing of new books wherein adventurous stories might be set forth and narrated. These

orders and permissions went abroad, and were published in all the provinces, not only of Africa, but of Andalusia.

CHAP. XLIV.—OF THE CONQUESTS OF THE ALMOHADES IN SPAIN. OF THEIR FURTHER EXTENSION OF TERRITORY, OF THEIR ARMY, AND OF THE ORDER OF THEIR MARCH.

IN Andalusia the army of the Almohades was now making considerable progress; they overran the territory of Granada, from which Prince Aly of the Almoravides found it necessary to retire: he withdrew to Almunecaub accordingly, determined there to embark and fly, in the event of affairs turning against him. His people then took possession of the fortresses which command the sea coast; but while awaiting the course of events in Almunecaub, Prince Aly received poison, of which he died in the year 551.

The Almohades shortly afterwards made themselves masters of Granada, which the Naib of Aben Gania surrendered to them on certain conditions, and they entered the Alcazaba, when the Chotba was made for Abdelmumen Ben Aly in all the mosques of the city. The Granadines then sent messengers to proffer the oath of allegiance to the king, by whom that city was added to the Amilia of Cid Abu Said, and the latter was named Wali thereof, to the intent that he might govern the whole district. But the Almohade troops had scarcely left the place, when the populace rose in rebellion, attacked the garrison, a great portion of which they slew, put the governor to death, and exalted Abdallah Ben Ayadh Aben Mardanis to the command of their city, he being much aided by his kinsman, Aben Hemsek, Lord of Xecura and Wali of Murcia, who was in alliance with the Christians.

In the commencement of the year 552 the Prince of the Almohades, even Cid Abu Said Ben Abdelmumen, so zealously pressed the siege of Almeria, both by land and sea, that the city was compelled to surrender. The Christians who formed its garrison demanded assurance for the security of their lives, with liberty to pass unimpeded to their own frontiers, and the conditions of surrender

having been arranged by the Vizier Alchatib Abu Giaffar Ben Atia, the city of Almeria and its inaccessible fortress were restored to Islam; an event which took place just ten years after it had first been taken by the Christians.

The Chotba for Abdelmumen Ben Aly was then made in the mosques of Almeria, and its walls, which had received considerable injury in the many combats delivered, were carefully repaired at all points. These things duly cared for, the army of the Almohades departed, and went to join the troops lying before Granada, Abdelmumen Ben Aly having commanded that the conquest of that city should be effected, and its Comarcas reduced to his obedience.

To the siege of Granada the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly furthermore despatched his son Cid Juzef and his general Abu Othman Said Ben Maymoun of Zanhaga, with a well-appointed force; to these troops were then joined those of Cid Abu Said, and all marching on Granada, the princes fixed their camp before the city. Further auxiliaries were received from Algarve by the Almohade army, these being sent by the Wali Muhamad Sid Ray, who had been confirmed in his possession of Xilba and Calat Mertula; he was the son of the Vizier Abdel Wahib Ben Sid Ray, who had also been Wali of Algarve.

These assembled forces now laid close siege to Granada, where many sanguinary combats and skirmishes ensued between the Granadines and Almohades, the latter attacking the city with engines of various kinds, and long continuing to keep the besieged well occupied by perpetual assaults. But the defence made by the citizens did not avail to their security; the Almohades finally took the place by force of arms, and the day of their entrance into Granada was one of atrocious carnage. Among others who there died fighting was the *hero** of the Christians, with all the cavaliers who were in his company, and who had been the allies of Aben Mardanis. The last-named general, with his kinsman, Ibrahim Aben Hemsek, fled on good horses, and by their speed of flight were delivered from death.

Matruc and the Sahib Salat affirm that this sanguinary

* These italics are in the original; the person here called "the hero of the Christians" is Alfonso, King of Arragon.—*Tr.*

entrance of the Almohades into Granada did not take place till the year 557, and that then ensued the terrible slaughter in which died the hero of the Christians with all his people. God, who knows all, knows how this may be. The Almoravides now perceiving that they could no longer hope to maintain themselves in Andalusia, passed over to Majorca, where the Almoravide generals, Aben Gania, father and son, both were; and this was indeed become their sole asylum, seeing that nothing remained to them in Spain.

In the same year of 552, King Abdelmumen Ben Aly received so many complaints of the conduct of his Vizier Abu Giaffar Ben Atia, that he was compelled to depose that officer, who was accused of having vexed and oppressed the people by much extortion. Ben Atia was in effect very rich, and for this cause, envy rising against him, caused his ruin. In the moon of Xawal, in the year above mentioned, the king commanded that he should be cast into prison, and confiscated all his possessions.* The office of Vizier, which had been held by Abu Giaffar Ben Atia, was then given to Abdel Selem Ben Muhamad Alcumi.

Now Abdel Selem had a beautiful daughter, to whom Cid Abu Hafas, the son of the king, was betrothed; but the marriage was not celebrated until after the death of Abu Giaffar Ben Atia, who was the father-in-law of Cid Abu Hafas, that prince having received his daughter likewise in marriage. It is true that Abdelmumen Ben Aly had previously commanded his son to repudiate the daughter of the fallen Vizier, although he knew that this order could not but cause heavy sorrow to the Prince Abu Hafas, by whom the daughter of Abu Giaffar Ben Atia was much beloved. He was compelled to obey nevertheless, and married the daughter of the new Vizier, Abdel Selem, as his father had commanded.

We find it furthermore related, as regards this matter, that Abdel Selem, knowing Abu Giaffar to approve the reluctance of the Prince to repudiate his daughter, and believing that he sought to excuse him to his father the King, sent a copy of verses to the late Vizier, and in the

* Abu Giaffar is said to have written verses to the king on that occasion, excusing his conduct, and on receiving that exculpation Abdelmumen is reported to have pardoned him, but did not restore to him either his property or his office.

wrapper of the scroll a certain poison, which caused his death. Aben Atia replied to these verses, exculpating himself from having taken any part in the intrigues attributed to him by Abdel Selem, without perceiving the injury produced by the treacherous missive he had received, or forming any suspicion of the truth; but he died of the effects on the following day.*

Aben Giaffar Ben Atia was a native of Camarola, in the East of Spain. He had been Mogrebi in Seville and its dependencies, in company with his brother, Yahye Ben Atia, during six years, three months, and eight days, and had exercised the office of Vizier fifteen years, two months, and two days. He was a man of great learning and prudence, and had much genius for poetry; but having favoured the Andalusians in Morocco, he had thereby attracted to himself many calumniators and bitter enemies.

About this time the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly commanded that a treatise should be written against the "Questions" of the Cordovan author, Abul Hassan Abdelmelic Ben Hayas.

In the beginning of the year 553, the King directed his forces against Mahedia. This city had been taken from the Christians of Sicily by the Prince Alhasen, son of Aly Ben Yahye Ben Temim El Maun Ben Yedis, of the family of Taxfin, who had long held it as his hereditary possession. Those enemies of God, the Christians, led on by the Lord of Sicilia, had besieged the place until they had finally reduced it, and had taken possession by force of arms. This occurred in the year 540, when the Prince Alhasen had returned to Medina, where he had established his residence; and when Abdelmumen Ben Aly had entered that city with his army, this Alhasen had gone forth to receive him. The King Abdelmumen was then so much pleased with his noble deportment, that knowing him to be of illustrious race, he gave him a daughter of his own to wife, and took him in his company to Morocco, where he bestowed on him one of the noble domains within his gift, with the most beautiful houses and gardens.

In that campaign of 553 here in question, the King was

* Alabar says that this event took place in the year 555.—*Condé.*

accompanied by Prince Alhasen Ben Aly. He had written to his provinces with orders for the drawing together of numerous troops; and the host assembled at his command was a very large one, comprising a strong body of cavalry, and foot-soldiers innumerable. Abdelmumen Ben Aly finally departed for the East from Medina Salè; and the order of his march was on this wise.

The troops were never set in motion until after the Azala or Prayer of Ahohbi,* which was made soon after the first appearance of the dawn, and a short time previous to the rising of the sun. The signal for the march was given by a large atambor, or drum of a round form, made for that purpose. It was construeted of a finely-sounding wood, and had fifteen ells in circumference; the colour was green, and the atambor was furthermore enriched with gold. The signal was given by three strokes on this enormous instrument, the sound of which could be heard at the distance of half a day's march, when the air was serene and still. These three strokes having been heard, the whole camp began to set itself in motion, and the march, for which all had been prepared, immediately commenced. Each Cabila followed its own standard; but in the march all the banners were furled, with the exception of that borne by the vanguard. This last, which was of white and azure, bearing crescents of gold, was carried aloft, and extended floating on the air.

The tents and pavilions were packed on mules and camels, as were also certain parts of the provisions; but there was a whole army of herdsmen, whose business it was to guard the sheep, oxen, and flocks of all kinds by which the vast force was accompanied, and which were indispensable to the support of the troops.

The number of Abdelmumen Ben Aly's infantry, on the occasion here described, was seventy thousand: he had separated his army into four divisions, each division marching apart, and going a day's journey before the next, to the end that none should suffer want of water, or lack sufficiency of space for lodgment. The troops marched only until the middle of the day, when they halted to repose; being encamped from the hour of the Adohar, or prayer of the

* Azohbi or Azahlia: the Hour of Dawn.

mid-day, until they recommenced their march on the day following, at the hour already mentioned. By this slow mode of progress, Abdelmumen Ben Aly expended six months in passing from Medina Salè to Tunis, the journey being one of seventy days only, for men who ride rapidly on horseback.

When the King mounted his horse, all the principal Xeques and generals of his court and army assembled around him, each making the Azala with Abdelmumen: that prayer finished, they separated, every leader taking his due position in the order of march. One hundred of these chiefs rode before their monarch, but at some distance: they were mounted on beautiful horses, the caparisons of which were bordered with fringes of gold, and had gold tassels of rich workmanship; their lances were adorned with inlaid work of silver and ivory, the banderoles being ribbons of various colours.

Abdelmumen took with him in his marches the Mushaf of Othman Ben Afan, the third Caliph, which had been borne to Cordova by Anasir Abderahman the Third, who was of the race of the Beni Omeyas, and of that branch thereof which had seated itself in Andalusia. From the time of Anasir Abderahman, the Mushaf had been kept in the great mosque of Cordova, until the period when the generals of Abdelmumen Ben Aly obtained possession of that city, when he commanded them to bring to him that invaluable deposit, and he then expended vast treasures in the embellishment thereof. It was kept in a rich casket of costly aromatic wood, covered with plates of gold, on which rubies and emeralds, finely inlaid with other precious stones of considerable value, formed graceful and beautiful figures. In the centre of each plate of gold was a ruby shaped like a horse's hoof, and having the natural size of the same; the lining was of cloth woven of green silk and gold, sprinkled over with rubies, emeralds, and other rich stones; the whole was carefully wrapped in cloth of gold, with borders of pearls. Every kind of riches had, indeed, been constantly lavished on the decorations of that treasured deposit by the various monarchs who had constituted themselves its guardians; since not only the Omeyas, but the Aben Abedes, the Aben Hudes, the Almoravides, and the

race of Sanhaga, had all vied with each other in the enrichment of the Mushaf.

The casket was borne on a costly bier, and on each of the four sides of the bier were four banners: it was now carried immediately before the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly, at whose right hand rode his son, Abul Hafaz, behind whom followed the other princes, sons of Abdelmumen, but at due distance, and not as placing themselves in contact with their elder brother.

After that company came the banners of all the tribes, each in its order; these were accompanied by a band of atabaleros, or kettle-drummers, the men riding on high horses, with their atambours of metal, and with them were the trumpeters, with their great trumpets, to say nothing of the remaining musicians, all bearing such instruments as are proper to the music of war.

Immediately after the trumpets came the walies, alcaydes, viziers, and ministers of various degrees, who were followed by the whole force, no man incommoding or embarrassing the progress of another. When the hour for encamping arrived, all departed to their appointed stations in the most perfect order; nor could any man go forth from his lodgment without the permission of his superiors.

Equally well arranged were all the measures needful for the provisioning of that great host, insomuch that none felt the want of his home, since all things needful were as abundant in the camp as in the markets of a populous city.

With this vast army of Almohades, Alarabes, and Zenetes, the King Abdelmumen Ben Aly passed through the eastern parts of Africa, subjugating many nations by the aid of God, and making himself lord of all the strongholds of that region, with the whole land of Zaba. Many rebellious towns in the Comarcas of the ancient Carthage were also then compelled to humble themselves before his prevailing arms.

When Abdelmumen Ben Aly approached Medina Tunis, there sallied forth from that city an embassy which the inhabitants had sent to meet him. The envoys were among the chief of the citizens; and first requiring security for their lives, they then requested to be received into the King's

favour and protection. Abdelmumen dismissed them with the reply that they were secure for themselves, their wives, their children, and their households; but with respect to their possessions, these must be distributed among his troops. The answer thus returned did not satisfy the people of Tunis, who closed their gates; whereupon King Abdelmumen remained before the place, besieging it closely for the space of three days, after which he passed forward, leaving a force to maintain the town in a state of blockade. He then directed his march to Cairvan, which he took, as he did likewise the City of Susa and that of Safes, from which last-mentioned town he repaired to the strongly fortified City of Mehadia; but before he had reached that place he received intelligence to the effect that the inhabitants of Tunis, closely pressed by his troops, had consented to surrender on the conditions he had offered. Thereupon Abdelmumen turned his horse's rein, and rode with his cavalry to Tunis, where he sacked the city, and caused all the riches of its people to be piled up in the market-place. He then divided all that was found with perfect equality among his soldiers, who afterwards held a kind of fair with their spoils, which they sold to the former owners of the property.

Medina Tunis was taken by Abdelmumen in the beginning of the year 554; when the King commanded that an alcazaba, or sort of triangular tower, should be constructed in the most elevated part of the city. Lofty and beautiful, this fabric served to the more effectual defence of the place; and between its exterior walls and the city were erected schools and colleges.

Due order having been taken for these works, Abdelmumen passed on to the siege of Medina Mehadia, which was garrisoned by the Christians of Sicily, who were in like manner lords of Medina Sifakis, and of Bona, both on the same coast. Mehadia was defended by three thousand Christians, but Abdelmumen now assailed it by land and sea. He reared engines of war against the walls, by means of which he attacked the town on the southern side, while his ships engaged the attention of the defenders on the north; and such was his eagerness for this conquest, that the assaults and combats ceased not, night or day.

To the succour of the besieged there came two hundred ships from Sicily, with troops, provisions, and engines of war. They were met on the part of Abdelmumen by the Alcayde and Ameer of the sea, Abdallah Ben Maymoun, with a large fleet of ships, well manned, and carrying forces from Andalusia and Almagreb. A fierce engagement then took place, with heavy loss on both sides; but the Moslemah were finally victorious. They took several of the Christian ships that were loaded with munitions of war, and burnt others; inflicting on their adversaries a very severe loss, not only as regarded their stores, but also by the destruction which they made among the crews of those vessels.

The siege of Medina Mehadia was a much protracted one, but the steadiness of the Almohades ultimately prevailed; and after a severe contest of six months and nine days the city was taken by them, when every Christian found therein was put to the sword, without sparing the life of a man.

This event is related in a different manner by Aben Yahye Ben Omeira, who tells us that when the Christians perceived the fixed determination of Abdelmumen Ben Aly to conquer them, and felt assured that he would not raise his hand from over the city until he had made it his own, they sent eight envoys to confer with the monarch in his camp. These men, addressing him with great humility and in very flattering terms, declared that they had found a prophecy written in certain of their books to the effect that he, Abdelmumen, must become master of the whole country, and of their city among the rest, but that the inhabitants of the same were bound to conceal their wish for his protection, and their intention of submitting to his rule, until the lapse of six months, which period having expired they would proceed to require security for their lives, and that received, would place themselves in his hands. This writer adds that Abdelmumen Ben Aly believed their assertions, and not only gave them security for their lives but allowed them moreover to depart freely with their property and arms, the king having signed those conditions at the end of the six months named by the envoys, and subsequently fulfilled them to the utmost: the Christian de-

fenders of Mahadia then departed with all freedom from that city and sailed for Sicily.

The conquest of Medina Mehadia was effected in the year 555, and that having been secured, the remaining cities and fortresses of the coasts surrendered without resistance, insomuch that the subjugation of all the eastern parts of Spain might be considered complete. The Cabilas and tribes that dwell near Barca, or who wander thence even to the confines of Medina Telencen, then resigned themselves to the rule of Abdelmumen; nor was there any intermediate territory that was not his own,—all was in fact now under his protection, and was governed by his Walies, Amils, and Alcaydes.

Abdelmumen then repaired and heightened the walls of many among the cities and fortresses thus surrendered to his power, while he caused mosques to be constructed in all, and likewise founded numerous schools and colleges for the instruction of children and youth.

At this time the king commanded that all the territory of Africa from Barca to Velad Noul, in Sus Alaksa, should be accurately measured by miles and parasangs, taking the land both in length and breadth, but deducting one-third from the whole for the mountains, rivers, lakes, &c. According to this measurement the king then decided the demarcation of the provinces, comarcas of cities, and jurisdiction of towns, all which he was thereby enabled to regulate with justice and exactitude in reference to the number of the population, and had moreover a certain guide whereby to decide the amount of contributions in fruits and flocks which each province ought to pay, due regard being had to the extent of wealth and degree of fruitfulness possessed by all.

This examination was furthermore useful, inasmuch as it enabled the king to judge of the measures that might usefully be taken for improving the products of the land, and ameliorating the labours of agriculture, with those needful to the care of flocks, which are the most valuable riches of a state. Abdelmumen Ben Aly is said to have been the first monarch who gave his attention to these arrangements of Almagreb.

Albornoz and Hannon affirm that the king completed the conquest of Mehadia on the day Axur, in the year 555. It was in this year also that the renowned Vizier Giaffar Ahmed Aben Atia was poisoned by the venom placed in a copy of verses sent him by Abdel Selem of Salè, who had succeeded the illustrious Andalusian in his office, when Abdelmumen deposed his former Vizier. In the same year the Christians made themselves masters of the fortress of Alcazar Alfetah, in Algarve, which was called the Alcazar of Abi Denis, when they put all who had been engaged in the defence to the edge of the sword.

END OF VOL. II.

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